



*A Year of
Beautiful
Thoughts*
Jeanie A.B. Greenough



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A Year of Beautiful Thoughts.

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For Boys and Girls

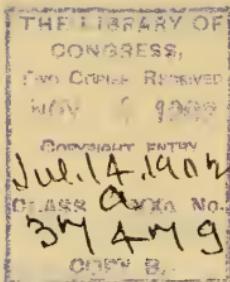
COMPILED BY
JEANIE A. B. GREENOUGH
Compiler of "At Dawn of Day," etc.

"Make yourselves nests of pleasant thoughts."—*Ruskin.*



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To
My Loved and Loving
Bertha.

Beautiful Thoughts.

January 1.

But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.—I COR. xiii. 13 (R. V.).

A HAPPY New Year to all ! Happy may it be through all the frosty winter days, the breezy March, the budding spring-time, and the blossoming summer,—happy through the golden autumn days, and happy through the Christmas month, to the very end ! How can it be made truly happy ? May it not by walking hand in hand with the beautiful angel, Love ? Love will make us wish nothing so much as to please our kind heavenly Father who loves us and watches over every moment of our lives. Love will make us gentle and helpful to every one about us, and kind to every living thing. Let us ask God to send the Love-angel to walk at our side, and we shall surely have a happy year.

THE CHILD AND THE YEAR.

Said the child to the youthful year,
“ What hast thou in store for me,
O giver of beautiful gifts,—what cheer,
What joy dost thou bring with thee ? ”

“ My seasons four shall bring
Their treasures ; the Winter’s snows,
The Autumn’s store and the flowers of Spring,
And the Summer’s perfect rose.

“All these, and more, shall be thine
 Dear child,—but the last and best
 Thyself must earn, by a strife divine
 If thou would’st be truly blest.

“Would’st know this last best gift?
 ’Tis a conscience clear and bright,—
 A peace of mind which the soul can lift
 To an infinite delight.

“Truth, patience, courage and love,
 If thou unto me canst bring,
 I will set thee all earth’s ills above,
 O child, and crown thee a king.”

CELIA THAXTER.

January 2.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.
 —ECCL. ix. 10.

“MOTHER,” said Anna, on New Year’s day, “my teacher wants me to choose a text to be my motto for the coming year ; what shall it be ?”

“It is hard to choose among so many good texts,” said mother ; “how would you like ‘Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might’? ‘Whatsoever’ includes everything,—every duty, every kindness, every self-denial, everything that you are able to do.”

“That is just the thing,” said Anna ; “I will have the text printed and hung up, to remind me of my whatsovers.”

“Here is one of my whatsovers,” thought she, the next day, as she saw a little lost child crying, and led her home. “Here is another ‘whatsoever,’ ” and she helped a poor lame woman to cross the street. She found her “whatsovers,” as she called them, every day, —helping mother, father, sister, brother,—every one who needed her kindness. Boys and girls, try to find whatsovers, with wide-open eyes, and to do them with your might, for Jesus’ sake.

LOVE'S GARDEN.

There is a quiet garden
From the rude world set apart ;
Where seeds for Christ are growing,—
This is the loving heart.

The tiny roots are loving thoughts,—
Sweet words, the fragrant flowers,
Which blossom into loving deeds,—
Ripe fruits for harvest hours.

Thus in our hearts the seeds of love
Are growing, year by year ;
And we show our love for Christ our Lord
By loving His children here.

ELLEN R. FIELD.

January 3.

The words of the pure are pleasant words.—PROV.
xv. 26.

ONLY a few sweet loving words,—that is all; but, coming from the heart and going to the heart, they would brighten many a life, and comfort many a soul, as the speaker of them little knows. Let us not be so chary of them.

MARY H. PERKINS.

PLEASANT WORDS.

If any little word of mine
May make a life the brighter,
If any little song of mine
May make a heart the lighter,—
God help me speak the little word
And take my bit of singing
And drop it in some lonely vale
To set the echoes ringing !

January 4.

Children's children are the crown of old men ; and the glory of children are their fathers.—PROV. xvii. 6.

I ASKED a little boy last evening if he had called his grandpapa to tea. "Yes," he replied; "when I went to call him, he was asleep, and I didn't know how to wake him. I didn't want to halloo at grandpapa, or to shake him; so I kissed his cheek, and that woke him very softly. Then I ran into the hall, and said, pretty loud,—'Grandpa, tea is ready'; and he never knew what woke him."

GRANDPAPA.

Grandpapa's hair is very white,
And grandpapa walks but slow;
He likes to sit in his easy-chair
While the children come and go:
"Hush, play quietly," says mamma,—
"Let nobody trouble dear grandpapa."

Grandpapa's hand is thin and weak,
It has worked hard all his days;
A strong right hand and an honest hand,
That has won all good men's praise.
"Kiss it tenderly," says mamma,
"Let every one honor grandpapa."

Grandpapa's eyes are growing dim.
They have looked on sorrow and death;
But the love-light never went out of them,
Nor the courage and the faith.
"You children, all of you," says mamma,
"Have need to look up to grandpapa."

Grandpapa's years are wearing few,
But he leaves a blessing behind,—
A good life lived, and a good fight fought,
True heart and equal mind:
"Remember, my children," says mamma,
"You bear the name of your grandpapa."

DINAH MULOCK CRAIK.

January 5.

Be ready to every good work.—TITUS iii. 1.

THE world needs nothing more than it needs happiness-makers.

JAMES R. MILLER.

“God gives us all some small sweet way
To set the world rejoicing.”

SOMETHING EACH DAY.

Something each day,—a smile,
It is not much to give ;
But the little gifts of life
Make sweet the days we live :
The world has weary hearts,
That we can bless and cheer,
And the smile for every day
Makes sunshine all the year.

Something each day,—a word,—
We cannot know its power ;
It grows in fruitfulness
As grows the tender flower ;
What comfort it may bring
Where all is dark and drear !
For a kind word every day
Makes pleasant all the year.

Something each day,—a deed
Of kindness and of good
To link in closer bonds
All human brotherhood,—
O, thus the heavenly will
We all may do while here !
For a good deed every day
Makes blessed all the year.

January 6.

Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.—PHIL. iv. 6.

I CAN do nothing without the help of God, and that even from moment to moment.

ST. ATHANASIUS.

THE FIRST TANGLE.

Once in an eastern palace wide,
A little child sat weaving;
So patiently her task she plied,
The men and women at her side
Flocked 'round her, almost grieving.

"How is it, little one," they said,
"You always work so cheerly?
You never seem to break your thread,
Or snarl and tangle it, instead
Of working smooth and clearly.

"Our weaving gets so worn and soiled,
Our silk so frayed and broken,
For all we've fretted, wept and toiled,
We know the lovely pattern's spoiled
Before the king has spoken."

The little child looked in their eyes,
So full of care and trouble,
And pity chased the sweet surprise
That filled her own, as sometimes flies
The rainbow in a bubble.

"I only go and tell the king,"
She said, abashed, and meekly,—
"You know," he said, "*in everything*"—
"Why, so do we!" they cried, "we bring
Him all our troubles weekly!"

She turned her little head aside,—
A moment let them wrangle,—
“Ah, but,” she softly then replied,
“I go and get the knot untied
At the *first little tangle* ! ”

Oh, little children,—weavers all !
Our broidery we spangle
With many a tear that need not fall,
If on our King we would but call
At the *first little tangle* !

ANNA F. BURNHAM.

January 7.

Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path.—Psa. xxvii. 11.

THOSE who travel among the Swiss mountains, or through the deserts of the East, need a guide. Not knowing the way, nor its dangers, they need some one who has been over the whole way before, and can guide them safely. God knows all the dangers of our life from its beginning to its end, and He offers to be our Guide. He says,—“I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye.” Let us thank Him for His sweet promise, and follow Him closely all our life long.

A PRAYER.

Lead us, Heavenly Father,
Lead us, Shepherd kind;
We are only children
Weak, and young, and blind.

All the way before us
Thou alone dost know;
Lead us, Heavenly Father,
Singing as we go.

Lead us, Heavenly Father,
In our opening way,—
Lead us in the morning
Of our little day :

While our hearts are happy,
While our souls are free,
May we give our childhood
As a song to Thee.

* * * * *

BROOKE HERFORD.

January 8.

Honor thy father and thy mother : that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.—Ex. xx. 12.

FOR unwearying patience and unchanging tenderness, the love of a true mother stands next to the love of our Father in heaven. And, perhaps, just because it is so constant,—because we “get used” to it,—we sometimes fail to show how much we appreciate it.

“All I am, my mother made me,” said John Quincy Adams, when president of the United States. O, be loyal, be true, be loving to your mother, dear boys and girls, and be proud to *show* how much you love her !

A BOY'S PROMISE.

The school was out, and down the street
A noisy crowd came thronging :
The hue of health, a gladness sweet,
To every face belonging.

Among them strode a little lad,
Who listened to another,
And mildly said, half grave, half sad,—
“I can't—I promised mother.”

A shout went up, a ringing shout,
Of boisterous derision ;
But not one moment left in doubt
That manly, brave decision.

“ Go where you please,—do what you will,”
He calmly told the other ;
“ But I shall keep my word, boys, still ;
I can’t,—I promised mother.”

Ah, who can doubt the future course
Of one, who thus had spoken ?
Through manhood’s struggle, gain and loss,
Could faith like this be broken ?

God’s blessing on that steadfast will,
Unyielding to another,
That bears all jeers and laughter still,
Because he promised mother !

GEORGE COOPER.

January 9.

If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day ; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable ; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words : then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord.—ISA. lviii. 13, 14.

HAVE you ever thought what a great blessing the Sabbath is ? Perhaps not, for children sometimes tire of keeping quiet and of trying not to break the fourth commandment. But, oh ! did it never come, how the busy, tired world would miss it ! I think we should all feel we had lost something very precious. Dean Farrar says, “ Very few of us, I fear, think enough of God.” On the Sabbath, there is rest, and time to think and read of God, and to hear and sing of Him. Let us never forget to thank God for the Sabbath. It is ours. God has given it to us for our best good ; and, while we are thanking Him for it, we must not forget how many there are who know nothing about it, and let us pray for them.

SWEET SABBATH BELLS.

O sweet Sabbath bells !
A message of musical chiming
Ye bring us from God, and we know what you say ;
Now rising, now falling, so tunefully calling
His children to seek Him and praise Him to-day.

The day we love best !
The brightest and best of the seven,
The pearl of the week, and the light of our way ;
We hold it a treasure, and count it a pleasure
To welcome its dawning, and praise Him to-day.

O sweet Sabbath rest !
A gift of our Father in heaven,—
A herald sent down from the Home far away,
With peace for the weary, and joy for the dreary ;
Then, oh ! let us thank Him and praise Him to-day !

January 10.

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee : bind them about thy neck ; write them upon the table of thine heart.—
PROV. iii. 3.

WRITE your name in kindness, love and mercy.
Good deeds will shine as the stars of heaven.

THOMAS CHALMERS.

FROST PICTURES.

Pictures on the window,
Painted by Jack Frost,
Coming at the midnight,
With the noon are lost ;
Here, a row of fir-trees,
Standing straight and tall ;
There, a rapid river,
And a waterfall ;

Here, a branch of coral,
From the briny sea ;
There, a weary traveler,
Resting 'neath a tree ;
Here, a grand old iceberg
Floating slowly on ;
There, a mighty forest
Of the torrid zone ;

Here, a swamp, all tangled,—
Rushes, ferns and brake ;
There, a rugged mountain,
Here, a little lake ;
Thus, a breath, the lightest
Floating on the air,
Jack Frost catches quickly,
And imprints it there.

And, thus, you are painting,
Little children, too,
On your life's fair window
Always something new.
But *your* little pictures
Will not pass away,
Like those Jack Frost's fingers
Paint, each winter day.

Each kind word or action
Is a picture bright ;
Every duty mastered
Is lovely, in the light ;
But each thought of anger,—
Every word of strife,
Blemishes the picture,—
Stains the glass of life.

Then, be very careful,
Every day and hour,
Lest unseemly touches
Trace your window o'er ;
Let the lines be always
Made by kindness bright ;
Paint your glass with pictures
Of the true and right.

January 11.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.—PHIL. iv. 13.

A LIFE need not be great to be beautiful. There may be as much beauty in a tiny flower, as in a majestic tree,—in a little gem, as in a great mountain. . . . A beautiful life is one that fulfils its mission,—that is, what God made it to be, and does what God made it to do.

JAMES R. MILLER.

LOVING AND GIVING.

Lord, teach us the lesson of loving,
The very first lesson of all ;
O Thou who dost love little children
How tender and sweet is Thy call !
Now help us to hear it, and give Thee
The love Thou art asking to-day :
Then help us to love one another,—
For this we most earnestly pray.

Lord, teach us the lesson of giving,
For this is the very next thing ;
Our love always ought to be showing
What offerings and fruits it can bring.
There are many who know not Thy mercy ;
There are millions in darkness and woe :
Our prayers and our gifts all are needed,
And all can do something, we know.

January 12.

And let us not be weary in well-doing.—GAL. vi. 9.

WHAT MARY GAVE.

SHE gave an hour of patient care to her little baby sister. She gave a string and crooked pin and some good advice to the three-year-old brother who wanted to play at fishing.

She waited upon the door, that Ellen, the maid, might have a precious hour to visit her sick baby at home,—for Ellen was a widow, and left her child with its grandmother, while she worked to get bread for both. . . . But this is not all that Mary gave. She looked so bright, and kind, and obliging, that she gave her mother a thrill of pleasure whenever she caught sight of the young face. She wrote a letter to her absent father, and gave patient attention to a long story from her grandmother, and, when it was ended, made her happy by a good-night kiss. Thus Mary had given valuable presents to six persons, in one day, and yet she had not a cent.

THE GIRLS THAT ARE WANTED.

The girls that are wanted are home-girls,—
Girls that are mother's right hand,
That fathers and brothers can trust in,
And the little ones understand ;
Girls that are fair on the hearthstone,
And pleasant, when nobody sees ;
Kind and sweet to their own folk,—
Ready and anxious to please.

The girls that are wanted are wise girls,
That know what to do and to say ;
That drive with a smile or a soft word
The gloom of the household away.
The girls that are wanted are good girls,—
Good girls from the heart to the lips ;
Pure, as the lily is white and pure,
From its heart to its sweet leaf-tips.

January 13.

Beloved, let us love one another.—I JOHN iv. 7.

THESE words were written by John, the “beloved disciple of Christ.” He lived a long, beautiful life of love and faithfulness to God. It is said that, when too old and feeble to preach, he yet went into the church at Ephesus, and spoke these parting words: “*Little children, love one another.*”

LITTLE CHILDREN, LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

A little girl, with a happy look,
 Sat slowly reading a ponderous book,
 All bound with velvet, and edged with gold,
 And its weight was more than a child could hold ;
 Yet dearly she loved to ponder it o'er,
 And every day she prized it more ;
 For it said :—and she looked at her smiling mother,—
 It said : “ Little children, love one another.”

She thought it was beautiful, in the book,
 And the lesson home to her heart she took.
 She walked on her way with a trusting grace,
 And a dove-like look in her meek young face,
 Which said, just as plain as words could say,
 “ The Holy Bible I must obey ; ”
 “ So, mamma, I’ll be kind to my darling brother,
 For little children must love each other.

“ I am sorry he’s naughty, and will not play,
 But I’ll love him still ; for I think the way
 To make him gentle and kind to me
 Will be better shown, if I let him see
 I strive to do what I think is right,
 And thus, when we kneel in prayer to-night,
 I will clasp my arms about my brother
 And say, ‘ Little children, love one another.’ ”

The little girl did as her Bible taught,
 And pleasant, indeed, was the change it wrought ;
 For the boy looked up in glad surprise,
 To meet the light of her loving eyes :
 His heart was full ; he could not speak,
 But he pressed a kiss on his sister’s cheek ;
 And God looked down on the happy mother,
 Whose little children loved one another.

FANNY.

January 14.

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth : keep the door of my lips.—PSA. cxli. 3.

LET your words be few and sweet, few and good, few and simple, few and sincere, few and pleasant.

Maxim of ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

WORDS.

One day a harsh word, rashly said,
Upon an evil journey sped,
And, like a sharp and cruel dart,
It pierced a fond and loving heart ;
It turned a friend into a foe,
And everywhere brought pain and woe.

A kind word followed it one day,—
Flew swiftly on its blessed way ;
It healed the wound, it soothed the pain,
And friends of old were friends again ;
It made the hate and anger cease,
And everywhere brought joy and peace.

But yet the harsh word left a trace
The kind word could not quite efface ;
And though the heart its love regained,
It bore a scar that long remained ;
Friends could forgive, but not forget,
Or lose the sense of keen regret.

Oh, if we could but learn to know
How swift and sure one word can go,
How would we weigh, with utmost care
Each thought, before it sought the air,
And only speak the words that move
Like white-winged messengers of love !

January 15.

Thou shalt call his name Jesus, (that is Saviour), for he shall save his people from their sins.—MATT. i. 21.

THE beautiful angel said to His father and mother, “Thou shalt call His name Jesus”; so they had no trouble in choosing a name. In those days every name had a well-known meaning. It was a pretty custom, but although names still have meanings, very few people care for them now. Jesus got His name because of its meaning only. There is no other name so beautiful, for it means “Saviour”; the angel told Mary so, when he

said, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people." And when thou hearest all the kind things that Jesus did, and understandest that He saves people from wickedness, who try to be like Him, thou wilt say He well deserves His beautiful name of "Saviour."

ROBERT BIRD (From "Jesus the Carpenter").

THE BLESSED NAME.

There is no name so sweet on earth,
No name so dear in heaven;
As that before His wondrous birth
To Christ the Saviour, given.
We love to sing around our King,
And hail Him blessed Jesus;
For there's no word, ear ever heard,
So dear, so sweet as Jesus!

'Twas Gabriel first that did proclaim
To His most blessed mother,
That name which now and evermore
We praise above all other.
And when He hung upon the cross
They wrote His name above Him,
That all might see the reason, we
Forevermore must love Him.

So now upon His Father's throne,
Almighty to release us
From sin and pains, He ever reigns,—
The Prince and Saviour, Jesus!
We love to sing around our King
And hail Him blessed Jesus;
For there's no word, ear ever heard,
So dear, so sweet as Jesus!

GEORGE W. BETHUNE.

January 16.

I will delight myself in thy commandments which I have loved.—Psa. cxix. 47.

"I wish I could mind God as my little dog does me,"

said a little boy, looking thoughtfully on his shaggy friend,—“he always looks *so pleased* to mind, and I don’t.”

KATE UPSON CLARK.

To-morrow, I will do better than yesterday ; and all to-morrows shall be better than the yesterdays.

WILLIAM DYER.

SUNSHINE IN THE HOUSE.

Brighter than the sunshine on a stormy April day
Is the smile with which a little maid can drive her tears
away :

Sweeter than the music of a silver-throated bird,
Comes forth her gentle answer to a wrath-provoking word ;
More welcome than the perfume breathed from violet or rose
Is the influence of sweetness that shall follow where she
goes ;

And, as the little streamlet sings while watering its flowers,
So she can make her work seem light, and sing through
busy hours.

Then set a guard on little lips, and little actions too,
With sunshine bright and music sweet begin each day anew ;
For nothing half so dear is found, in garden, field, or wood,
As the precious little boy or girl, who’s trying to be good.

CLARA LOUISE BURNHAM.

January 17.

*Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye,
but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye ?
Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out
the mote out of thine eye, and behold a beam is in thine
own eye ? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out
of thine own eye ; and then shalt thou see clearly to
cast out the mote out of thy brother’s eye.—MATT. vii.
3, 4, 5.*

WE talk so much, and we think so much more, of the trouble we have with others, that we more than half persuade ourselves that if everybody else were just right, we could get on easily in life ; but the fact is, that more than half of all our troubles, *even* of our troubles with others,

grow out of our own faults and our own failures, and not the faults and failures of other people. . . . Until we get rid of ourselves, or until we are lifted above all selfish thought of ourselves, there is continual trouble for us, however other people bear themselves.

A HINT.

A red glass makes everything seen through it red,
While blue glass turns everything blue;
So when every one seems to you selfish and cross,
Perhaps the real fault is in you!

HENRIETTA R. ELIOT.

January 18.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. . . . And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.—EZEK. xxxvi. 26, 27.

How do you grow good? God is always trying to make me good, and I try not to hinder Him. . . . He shall do with me what He pleases, and I will help Him.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

GOOD ALL DAY.

A beautiful boy, with forehead fair,
And earnest eyes, and dark brown hair,
Arose with the early morning light;
His soul was filled with calm delight,
And he said to himself, as he knelt to pray,
"I am resolved I'll be good to-day."

Not a selfish act, not a look of hate,
Not an unkind word to his young playmate,
Did the angels hear thro' the live long day;
Oh no! the record they bore away
When they sped to heaven in the soft twilight,
Was written in letters of golden light.

And when,—as the busy day was done,
And the twinkling stars rose, one by one,
The little boy knelt once more by his bed,—
With a happy heart, he softly said,
“ My Father, Thou’st helped me be good to-day,
Oh, may I be holy and pure alway ! ”

And thus, dear children, if you would do right,
And wish to be guarded by angels of light,
You must kneel every morning in earnest prayer,
And ask your Heavenly Father’s care ;
And then, every evening, with joy you may say,
“ I’m happy, because I’ve been good to-day.”

January 19.

Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps ? —JOB
xxxii. 4.

How much God is like a mother ! He not only
watches the footsteps of His children, but He listens to
hear their cry.

FEAR NOT.

Yea, fear not, fear not, little ones ;
There is in Heaven an Eye
That looks with yearning fondness down
On all the paths ye try.

’Tis He who guides the sparrow’s wing,
And guards her little brood ;
Who hears the ravens when they cry,
And fills them all with food.

’Tis He who clothes the field with flowers,
And pours the light abroad ;
’Tis He who numbers all your hours,—
Your Father and your God.

Ye are the chosen of His love,—
His most peculiar care ;
And will He guide the fluttering dove,
And not regard your prayer ?

Nay, fear not, fear not, little ones ;
There is in Heaven an Eye
That looks with yearning fondness down
On all the paths you try.

He'll keep you when the storm is wild,
And when the flood is near ;
O trust Him, trust Him as a child,
And you have naught to fear.

Hymns for Mothers and Children.

January 20.

A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly.—
PROV. xviii. 24.

WE can make it a Christian duty, not only to love but to be loving,—not only to be true friends but to show ourselves friendly. We can make ourselves say the kind things that rise in our hearts, and tremble back on our lips,—do the gentle and helpful deeds which we long to do, and shrink back from ; and, little by little, it will grow easier, the love spoken will bring the answer of love,—the kind deed will bring back a kind deed in return.

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

AN ANSWER TO A PUZZLE.

“ Dear little girl, chiding the morning long,
With pouting lip and eyes all wet and blue,
Counting it as a hardship and a wrong
That other children are more loved than you,—

“ ‘Tis so unjust ! ” you say, “ and so unkind ! ”
Bending the while a puzzled, angry brow,—
“ How can you help it ? —If you will not mind,
Nor think me cruel, I will tell you how.

“ Sweet things from sweet, and fair from fair, must be,
Hearts have their wages, reckonings strict are made ;
We scold, rebel, but other people see
That soon or late, we are exactly paid.

“ The willing love which counts not any cost,
But daily lavishes its first and best,
Although to careless eyes its pains seem lost,
Reaps, in the end, a tenfold interest ;

“ While selfish souls, who keep a strict account
And tally, like a huckster in his stall,
Of all they give and feel, and the amount,
Get back their dues, indeed,—but that is all.

“ Love is not free to take, like sun and air,
Nor given away for naught, to any one ;
It is no common right for men to share,—
Like all things precious, it is sought and won.

“ So, if another is more loved than you,—
Say not, ‘ It is unjust ! ’ but say,—‘ If she
Has earned more love than I, it is her due ;
When I deserve more, it will come to me.’

“ But, if your longing be for love, indeed,
I’ll teach you how to win it,—a sure way ;
Love, and be lovely ; that is all you need,
And what you wish for, will be yours, some day.”

SUSAN COOLIDGE.

January 21.

Beauty is vain ; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.—Prov. xxxi. 30.

BEAUTIFUL thoughts make a beautiful soul, and a beautiful soul makes a beautiful face.

LOVELINESS.

Once I knew a little girl,
Very plain ;
You might try her hair to curl
All in vain ;
On her cheek no tints of rose
Paled and blushed, or sought repose ;
She was plain.

But the thoughts that through her brain
Came and went,
As a recompense for pain,
Angels sent ;
So, full many a beauteous thing,
In her young soul blossoming,
Gave content.

Every thought was full of grace,
Pure and true ;
And in time the homely face
Lovelier grew
With a heavenly radiance bright
From the soul's reflected light
Shining through.

So I tell you, little child,
Plain or poor,
If your thoughts are undefiled
You are sure
Of the loveliness of worth ;
And this beauty, not of earth,
Will endure.

MARIA LOCEY.

January 22.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.—MATT. xi. 29.

A BOY'S temptations are no harder for a boy than a man's temptations for a man. It is as much a boy's duty to be faithful and just and kind on the playground, or at school, or at home, as it is a man's duty to be just and honest and true, in the counting-room or in the Senate-hall. It is just as much a boy's duty to imitate the boy Jesus, as it is a man's duty to imitate the man Jesus.

A BOY'S HYMN.

" Just as I am," Thine own to be,
Friend of the young who lovest me,
To consecrate myself to Thee,
O Jesus Christ, I come.

In the glad morning of my day,
My life to give, my vows to pay,
With no reserve, and no delay,
With all my heart, I come.

I would live ever in the light,
I would work ever for the right,
I would serve Thee with all my might,
Therefore to Thee I come.

'Just as I am,' young, strong and free,
To be the best that I can be
For truth, and righteousness, and Thee,
Lord of my life, I come.

With many dreams of fame and gold,
Success and joy, to make me bold ;
But, dearer still, my faith to hold,
For my whole life, I come.

And for Thy sake to win renown,
And then to take my victor's crown,
And at Thy feet to cast it down,
O, Master ! Lord ! I come.

MARIANNE FARNINGHAM.

January 23.

But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do : for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.—MATT. vi. 7.

WHEN thou prayest, remember to say little, and to mean every word. Rather do not pray at all than pray without thinking. Ask for the Holy Spirit, that He may never leave thee. Learn the prayer of Jesus, beginning : "Our Father which art in Heaven." Pray as if Jesus stood beside thee listening ; pray anywhere, and at any time, especially at evening and morning, remembering that prayer from a pure heart is sweet as the fragrance of flowers.

ROBERT BIRD.

TRUE PRAYER.

To say my prayers is not to pray
Unless I *mean* the words I say ;
Unless I think to whom I speak,
And with my heart, His favor seek.

Then let me, when I come to pray,
Not only mind the words I say,
But let me strive, with earnest care,
To have my *heart* go with my prayer.

January 24.

He giveth snow like wool : he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes. He casteth forth his ice like morsels : who can stand before his cold ? He sendeth out his word and melteth them ; he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow.—Psa. cxlvii. 16-18.

IT is not only that the snow makes fair what was good before, but it is a messenger of love from heaven bearing glad tidings of great joy. Hope for the future comes down in every tiny snowflake. The spring sun will mount higher and higher in the heavens ; the sweet snow will sink down into the arms of the violets ; and, at the word of the Lord, the earth shall come up once more, “as a bride adorned for her husband.”

GAIL HAMILTON.

IT SNOWS.

It snows ! it snows ! from out the sky
The feathered flakes, how fast they fly !
Like little birds that don't know why
They're on the chase from place to place,
While neither can the other trace.
It snows ! it snows ! a merry play
Is o'er us on this heavy day.

As dancers in an airy hall
That hasn't room to hold them all,
While some keep up, and others fall,
The atoms shift; then, thick and swift,
They drive along to form the drift,
That, weaving up, so dazzling white,
Is rising, like a wall of light.

But now the wind comes whistling loud
To snatch and waft it, as a cloud,
Or giant phantom in a shroud;
It spreads! it curls! it mounts and whirls!
At length a mighty wing unfurls;
And then away! but where, none knows
Or ever will. It snows! it snows!

To-morrow will the storm be done;
Then out will come the golden sun,
And we shall see, upon the run
Before his beams, in sparkling streams,
What now a curtain o'er him seems.
And thus with life,—it ever goes;
'Tis shade and shine! It snows! it snows!

HANNAH F. GOULD.

January 25.

I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.—PSA. xxxiv. 1.

IF we lift up our eyes to heaven, God's glory shineth forth; if we cast them down upon the earth, it is full of His goodness. The hills and the valleys rejoice and sing; fields, rivers and woods resound His praise. We will think of God when we play and when we work; when we walk out and when we come in; when we sleep and when we wake; His praise shall dwell continually upon our lips.

ANNA L. BARBAULD.

QUESTIONS.

Who lights the star-lamps in the skies,
When evening comes, and daylight flies?
Who puts them out before the sun
His fiery course has well begun?

Who wraps in sleep the gentle flowers,
Through all the long, dark, wintry hours?
Who bids them ope their starry eyes,
When summer's sun lights summer skies?

Who scatters blossoms o'er the lea,
Till all the land is fair to see?
And when the August heats are past,
Who brings the ripened fruit at last?

Who binds the brook in icy chains,
Hushing its laughter through the plains,
Till warm days come, when bird and bee
Awake their spring-tide revelry?

Our loving Father in the skies,—
He spreads these beauties for our eyes;
With love and gratitude each day,
Shall we His tender care repay?—

G. V. S.

January 26.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.
—JAMES iv. 8.

DEAREST,—I am sure you have lived very near to God to-day,—you have been so good and happy. Let each day be like this, and life will become a sweet song for you and all who love you,—none so much as your

MOTHER.

(Little note to Louisa M. Alcott from her mother.)

MY KINGDOM.¹

A little kingdom I possess,
Where thoughts and feelings dwell ;
And very hard I find the task
Of governing it well ;
For passion tempts and troubles me,
A wayward will misleads,
And selfishness its shadow casts
On all my words and deeds.

How can I learn to rule myself,—
To be the child I should,—
Honest and brave, nor ever tire
Of trying to be good ?
How can I keep a sunny soul
To shine along life's way ?
How can I tune my little heart
To sweetly sing all day ?

Dear Father, help me with the love
That casteth out my fear ;
Teach me to lean on Thee, and feel
That Thou art very near,—
That no temptation is unseen,
No childish grief too small,
Since Thou, with patience infinite
Doth soothe and comfort all.

I do not ask for any crown
But that which all may win,
Nor seek to conquer any world
Except the one within.
Be Thou my Guide, until I find,
Led by a tender Hand,
Thy happy kingdom in *myself*,
And dare to take command.

LOUISA M. ALCOTT.

¹ Written at fourteen years old.

January 27.

Love covereth all sins.—PROV. x. 12.

REMEMBER that *love* is the burden which Jesus asks thee to bear,—*love*, which makes all commands light,—

the love which makes thee glad to do what thy father and mother tell thee ; that is the kind of love, which thou art to have for Jesus.

ROBERT BIRD.

THE TRUE ARTIST.

I read a legend of a monk who painted
In an old convent cell, in days gone by,
Pictures of martyrs, and of virgins sainted,
And the sweet Christ-face, with the crown of thorns.

Poor daubs ! Not fit to be a chapel's treasure ;
Full many a taunting word upon them fell ;
But the good abbot let him, for his pleasure,
Adorn with them his solitary cell.

One night the poor monk mused : " Could I but render
Honor to Christ, as other painters do,—
Were but my skill as great as is the tender
Love, that inspires me when His cross I view !

" But no ! 'tis vain, I toil and strive in sorrow ;
What man so scorns, still less can *He* admire ;
My life's work is all valueless ; to-morrow
I'll cast my ill-wrought pictures in the fire."

He raised his eyes ; within his cell, O wonder !
There stood a visitor ! thorn-crowned was He ;
And a sweet voice, the silence rent asunder :
" I scorn no work that's done for love of Me."

And, 'round the walls, the paintings shone resplendent,
With lights and colors to this world unknown ;
A perfect beauty, and a hue transcendent
That never yet on mortal canvas shone.

There is a meaning in the strange old story,—
Let none dare judge his brother's worth or need ;
The pure intent gives to the act its glory,—
The noblest purpose makes the grandest deed.

January 28.

Cease to do evil; learn to do well.—ISA. i. 16, 17.

If you should fail, and commit some of your old faults, do not be disheartened, but rise up and go on again, as if you had not fallen.

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

A SECRET.

Shall I be like grandmamma when I am old?

Shall I wear such a queer little bonnet,—

No feathers, no posies, but just a plain fold,

With a little white edging upon it?

Shall I sit in an easy-chair all the day long,

With a great ball of wool and a stocking?

Shall I think it quite dreadful for folks to do wrong,

And dirt and disorder so shocking?

Shall I wear a white cap full of dear little bows,

And a row of white curls on my forehead?

Shall I keep my face clean, and take care of my clothes,

And never be snappish and horrid?

Shall I think that the Bible's the nicest of books,

And remember the sermon on Sunday,

And not think how stupid the minister looks,

And wish it would only be Monday?

Just wait till I tell you what grandma once said,—

I hope you won't think I am crazy,—

It happened one day when they sent me to bed,

For being ill-tempered and lazy;

She came and sat by me, and patted my hand,

And told me,—“There's no use in crying;

It's by stumbling, my pet, that we know how to stand,

And we always grow better by trying.”

Was any one ever so wicked as me?”

I asked her, between my sad sobbing,—

Then grandmamma laughed just as hard as could be,

And her little white curls went bobbing;

“Was any one ever so naughty as you?

I'm sure that I know of *one* other.”

“Who was it?” I asked; “oh, please tell me, do!”

She whispered, “Your own grandmother!”

Now isn't it strange? But of course it is true,—
I can tell you just one thing about it,—
She'd not tell a story, whatever she'd do,
And we'd only be silly to doubt it;
But, of course, I feel certain you never will tell,
For how perfectly dreadful 'twould be
To have people know, who all love her so well,
That grandma was ever like me.

January 29.

This one thing I do: forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.—PHIL. iii. 13, 14.

EACH day is a new chance given you by God. A new chance, a new leaf, a new life,—this is the golden, the unspeakable gift which each new day offers you.

FREDERIC W. FARRAR.

OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

Over and over again,
No matter which way I turn,
I always find, in the book of Life
Some lesson I have to learn:
I must take my turn at the mill,
I must grind out the golden grain,
I must work at my task with a resolute will,
Over and over again.

We cannot measure the need
Of even the tiniest flower,
Nor check the flow of the golden sands
That run through a single hour;
But the morning dew must fall,
And the sun, and the summer rain
Must do their part, and perform it all
Over and over again.

Over and over again
The brook through the meadow flows,
And over and over again
The ponderous mill-wheel goes ;
Once doing will not suffice,
Though doing be not in vain,
And a blessing failing us once or twice
May come, if we try again.

The path that has once been trod
Is never so rough to the feet ;
And the lesson we once have learned
Is never so hard to repeat.
Though sorrowful tears may fall,
And the heart, to its depths, be riven
With storm and tempest, we need them all
To render us meet for heaven.

JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

January 30.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.—PSA. cxix. 105.

O, how love I thy law ! it is my meditation all the day.
—PSA. cxix. 97.

WHEN Sir Walter Scott lay dying, he was carried into his dining-room, that he might gaze on the beautiful river Tweed, which he so much enjoyed. He then asked his son-in-law, Mr. Lockhart, to read to him. “What book ?” said Mr. Lockhart. “What book ?” repeated Sir Walter ; “there is but one book,—*the Bible*,—read that.”

THE BOOK.

Ever would I fain be reading
In the ancient, holy Book,—
Of my Saviour’s gentle pleading,
Truth in every word and look ;

How, when children came, He blessed them,
Suffered no man to reprove ;
Took them in His arms and pressed them
To His heart, with words of love ;

How He healed the sick and dying,
Heard the contrite sinner's moan,
Sought the poor, and stilled their crying,
Called them brothers, and His own.

Still I read the ancient story,
And my joy is ever new ;
How for us He left His glory,
How He still is kind and true.

LUISE HENSEL (Translated by Catherine Winkworth).

January 31.

I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause : which doeth great things and unsearchable ; marvelous things without number ; who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields.—Job v. 8-10.

THE ground around us is now sheeted with snow, and the buds of the apple-orchard look as brown and still, and sealed, as if they were not within a few weeks of a glorious resurrection of green leaves and rose-tipped blossoms. But it does not follow that nothing is doing, because we hear and see nothing. In every one of these long warm days, the sun's power is gradually and silently awakening the dormant forces of the tree, whispering at the root, and thrilling through the branches ; and, by and by, before we think of it, what a bursting forth, what a new creation ! as if angels, descending in the night, had wreathed the trees with the roses of heaven, and left them standing altars of perfume and beauty.

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

TALKING IN THEIR SLEEP.

“ You think I am dead,”
The apple-tree said,
“ Because I have never a leaf to show,—
Because I stoop,
And my branches droop,
And the dull gray mosses over me grow !
But I’m all alive in trunk and shoot ;
The buds of next May
I fold away,—
But I pity the withered grass at my root.”

“ You think I am dead,”
The quick grass said,
“ Because I’ve not started with stem and blade :
But, under the ground,
I am safe and sound
With the snow’s thick blanket over me laid ;
I’m all alive and ready to shoot,
Should the spring of the year
Come dancing here,—
But I pity the flower without branch or root.”

“ You think I am dead,”
A soft voice said,
“ Because not a branch or root I own !
I never have died,
But close I hide
In a plumpy seed that the wind has sown ;
Patient I wait through the long winter hours ;
You will see me again,—
I shall laugh at you, then,
Out of the eyes of a hundred flowers.”

EDITH M. THOMAS.

February 1.

Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient.
—JAS. v. 7, 8.

MANY boys and girls do not know how to wait for good things. They must have their wants supplied at

once. They can scarcely wait to grow. They would be five years older than they are at their next birthday, if they could. They would get through their school-days in one year, were it possible. They want to hurry up Christmas, Fourth of July and other holidays; they cannot wait so long for them. . . . Patient waiters are the only ones who get what they wait for. One of our noblest statesmen says, "Success is for those who know how to wait." And Longfellow writes, "All things come 'round to him who will but wait."

WILLIAM M. THAYER.

WAIT.

When the icy snow is deep,
Covering the frozen land,
Do the little flowerets peep
To be crushed by Winter's hand?

No, they wait for brighter days,
Wait for bees and butterflies;
Then their dainty heads they raise
To the sunny, sunny skies.

When the cruel north winds sigh,
When 'tis cold with wind and rain,
Do the birdies homeward fly
Only to go back again?

No, they wait for spring to come,—
Wait for gladsome sun and showers,
Then they seek their northern home,—
Seek its leafy, fragrant bowers.

Trustful as the birds and flowers,
Though our spring of joy be late,
Though we long for brighter hours,
We must ever learn to wait.

DORA READ GOODALE.

February 2.

Stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.—
JOB xxxvii. 14.

WHEN the cold weather comes, some plants die, and some go to sleep for the winter. Look at a tree; its branches are all bare; it seems as if it had no life in it. But there is life there, and it will show itself next spring. Its life is asleep, its sap is all still, in the pipes; the mouths in the roots have stopped their busy work; the buds all over the tree are asleep in their winter-cradles. The wind rocks them back and forth, but never wakes them up. As soon, in the spring, as they feel the warmth, they begin to swell, and soon go to work to make leaves, and flowers, and fruits.

Some plants die down to the ground,—the beautiful snow covers them, as with a soft, warm blanket, and the roots live through the winter. This is the way with tulips and daffodils and the little crocuses that peep up so early in the spring. They come up from the roots that have been in the ground all winter. It is thus that God cares for the tender plants.

WORTHINGTON HOOKER.

SNOW-FLAKES.

Soft—soft—soft
From their cloudland home
They steal, when the gray old world's at rest;
Whiter they than the ocean foam,
Light as the down on the eider's breast;
Soft they fall through the winter night,
Dancing down by the moon's pale light.

They fall—fall—fall
Through the winter night,
Till the gray old world is hid from sight;
They fall—fall—fall
By the moon's pale light,
Till the earth is robed in a robe of white.
They fall—fall—fall
Over all.

Then Winter his bitterest blasts may bring
But the world is warm where the snow lies deep,
And the snow-flakes faithful ward will keep ;
And snug 'neath their snowy covering
The flowers will wait for the voice of Spring.

CHARLES L. BENJAMIN.

February 3.

That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us.—ACTS xvii. 27.

Two little girls were walking homeward one moonlight evening. I overheard one of them say: "Sister Annie, it doesn't make any difference how fast we walk, the moon keeps up with us every step of the way ; it doesn't move at all, and yet it is always going along with us." So it is with God in heaven,—though He seems far away, He is keeping step with us in the march of life.

A CHILD'S THOUGHTS ABOUT GOD.

God is not very far away,
He knows each thing I do or say ;
In sun and stars His glories shine,
Yet dwells within this heart of mine.

He has no form that I can see,
Yet everywhere appears to me,—
In rolling prairie, leafy wood,—
But more in friends so kind and good.

I hear Him, too, in rustling trees,
In rippling brooks and murmuring breeze,—
But more in happy singing birds,
In grazing flocks and lowing herds.

I need not go to heaven to see
The God who is so near to me ;
The loneliest spot I need not fear,
Since He, the Almighty, is so near.

In every pleasant sound I hear
His gentle voice falls on my ear;
In every loving face I see,
The God of heaven smiles on me.

I must show forth His likeness, too,
In all I think, or say, or do;
'Tis He who loves within my heart,—
I am of Him a little part.

KATE LAWRENCE.

February 4.

I will both lay me down in peace and sleep; for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.—PSA. iv. 8.

EARTH has nothing human so gentle as true mother-love; but God's wing that folds down over you is gentler than even mother-love, and you can never get out from beneath it. It holds you close to the gentle heart of the divine Father. You need never be afraid while resting there.

JAMES R. MILLER.

THE MOTHER'S CRADLE-SONG.

O little child, lie still and sleep;
Jesus is near,—thou need'st not fear;
No one need fear whom God doth keep
 By day or night;
Then lay thee down in slumber deep
 Till morning light.

O little child, be still and rest;
He sweetly sleeps whom Jesus keeps;
And in the morning wake so blest
 His child to be.
Love every one, but love Him best,—
 He first loved thee.

O little child, when thou must die,
 Fear nothing then, but say "Amen"
To God's demand, and quiet lie
 In His kind Hand,
Till He shall say: "Dear child, come, fly
 To Heaven's bright land."

Then, when thy work on earth is done,
Thou shalt ascend to meet thy Friend ;
Jesus the little child will own,
Safe at His side ;
And thou shalt dwell before the throne,
For He hath died.

From the Swedish.

February 5.

The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.—PROV. xv. 3.

THE beautiful thing about life, is, that no matter how lowly our place is, it is in the King's sight. There are a great many things we cannot do ; we must do what we can do, especially the little duties.

MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

NEVER OUT OF SIGHT.

I know a little saying
That is altogether true ;
My little boy, my little girl,
The saying is for you.
'Tis this,—O blue and black eyes,
And gray,—so deep and bright,—
No child in all this careless world
Is ever out of sight.

No matter whether field or glen,
Or city's crowded way,
Or pleasure's laugh, or labor's hum,
Entice your feet to stray ;
Some one is always watching you ;
And, whether wrong or right,
No child in all this busy world
Is ever out of sight.

Some one is always watching you,
And marking what you do,
To see if all your childhood's acts
Are honest, brave, and true ;

And, watchful more than mortal kind,
God's angels, pure and white,
In gladness or in sorrowing,
Are keeping you in sight.

O, bear in mind, my little one,
And let your mark be high,
You do whatever thing you do,
Beneath God's loving eye.
O, bear in mind, my precious one,
And keep your good name bright,—
No child upon this round, round earth
Is ever out of sight.

February 6.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

—PHIL. ii. 5.

IN a cemetery, a little white stone marks the grave of a little girl. On the stone are chiseled these beautiful words:—"A child of whom her playmates said,—'It was easier to be good when she was with us.'"

THE DARLING LITTLE GIRL.

Who's the darling little girl
Everybody loves to see?
She it is whose sunny face
Is as sweet as sweet can be.

Who's the darling little girl
Everybody loves to hear?
She it is whose pleasant voice
Falls like music on the ear.

Who's the darling little girl
Everybody loves to know?
She it is whose acts and thoughts
All are pure as whitest snow.

Who's the darling little girl
Christ, our blessed Lord, doth love ?
She it is, who, meek and good,
Daily grows like Him above.

Melodies for Childhood.

February 7.

Not slothful in business ; fervent in spirit ; serving the Lord.—ROM. xii. 11.

DUTY may sometimes be a hard master to follow, but its reward more than makes up ; for it is always a *clear conscience*.

GERTRUDE ROBINSON.

Every slight annoyance bravely borne, strengthens you to carry a heavier burden, and your simple, daily duties faithfully performed, are preparing you for the greatest work with which God trusts His children. Remember that every day is a preparation, and the trifling success of to-day, makes possible the grand victory of to-morrow.

DUTY AND INCLINATION.

“ Stay at home,” said Inclination,—
“ Let the errand wait ; ”
“ Go at once,” said Duty, sternly,
“ Or you’ll be too late.”

“ But it snows,” said Inclination,—
“ And the wind is keen ; ”
“ Never mind all that,” said Duty,—
“ Go and brave it, Jean.”

Jean stepped out into the garden,
Looked up in the sky ;
Clouded, shrouded, dreary, sunless,—
Snow, unceasingly.

"Stay," again said Inclination;

"Go," said Duty,—"go!"

Forth went Jean, with no more waiting,

Forth into the snow.

You will smile if now I tell you

That this quiet strife,—

Duty conquering Inclination,—

Strengthened all her life.

February 8.

Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.—JER. xiii. 23.

IF, in doing an act, we saw a chain winding around our bodies, we should be alarmed. But *habit* binds chains by every deed.

WILLIAM E. CHANNING.

HOW?

How shall I a habit break?

As you did that habit make.

As you gathered, you must lose,

As you yielded,—now refuse.

Thread by thread the strands we twist

Till they bind us, neck and wrist;

Thread by thread the patient hand

Must untwine, ere free we stand;

As we builded, stone by stone,

We must toil, unhelped, alone,

Till the wall is overthrown.

JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY.

February 9.

Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.—PSA. xxxvii. 3.

"I WANT some one to be glad that I was born," said a lonely woman; so she celebrated her birthday by carrying gifts to others as lonely as herself,—to the poor,

the sick, and the sad. It is pleasant to be remembered, and to receive presents, but the noblest, best, and happiest thought that can come to us on our birthdays, is, that we can make some one happier because we were born.

IN THE HEART.

If no kindly thought or word
 We can give, some soul to bless,—
If our hands, from hour to hour,
 Do no deeds of gentleness,—
If to lone and weary ones
 We no comfort will impart,—
Though 'tis summer in the sky,
 Yet 'tis winter in the heart.

If we strive to lift the gloom,
 From a dark and burdened life,—
If we seek to lull the storm
 Of our fallen brother's strife,—
If we bid all hate and scorn
 From the spirit to depart,—
Though 'tis winter in the sky,
 Yet 'tis summer in the heart.

GEORGE COOPER.

February 10.

Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul.
—PROV. xvi. 24.

How careful one ought to be, to be kind and thoughtful of one's old friends ! It is so soon too late to be good to them, and then one is always *so* grieved.

SARA ORNE JEWETT.

TO THE CHILDREN.

Dear little children, wherever you be
Who are watched and cherished tenderly
 By father and by mother ;
Who are comforted by the love that lies
In the kindly depths of a sister's eyes,
 Or the helpful words of a brother :—

I charge you, by the years to come,
When some shall be far away from home,
 And some shall be gone forever ;
By all you will have to feel at the last,
When you stand alone and think of the past,
 That you *speak unkindly never!*

For cruel words,—nay, even less,—
Words spoken only in thoughtlessness,
 Nor kept against you after,—
If they made the face of a mother sad,
Or a tender sister's heart less glad,
 Or checked a brother's laughter,

Will rise again, and they will be heard,
And every thoughtless, foolish word
 That ever your lips have spoken,
After the lapse of years and years,
Will wring from you such bitter tears
 As fall when the heart is broken.

* * * * *

Dear little innocent, precious ones,—
Be loving, dutiful daughters and sons,
 To father and to mother ;
And, to save yourselves from the bitter pain,
That comes when regret and remorse are vain,
 Be good to one another!

PHŒBE CAREY.

February 11.

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue ; but in deed and in truth.—I JOHN iii. 18.

THERE is no service like his, that serves because he loves.

PHILIP SIDNEY.

WHICH LOVED BEST?

“ I love you, mother,” said little John ;
Then, forgetting his work, his cap went on,
And he was off to the garden swing,
And left her the water and wood to bring.

“I love you, mother,” said rosy Nell,
“I love you better than tongue can tell ;”
Then she teased and pouted full half a day,
Till her mother rejoiced when she left to play.

“I love you, mother,” said little Fan,
“To-day I’ll help you all I can ;
How glad I am school doesn’t keep ! ”
So she rocked the baby till it fell asleep.

Then, stepping softly, she brought the broom,
And swept the floor, and tidied the room ;
Busy and happy all day was she,—
Helpful and happy as child could be.

“I love you, mother,” again they said,—
Three little children going to bed ;
How do you think that mother guessed
Which of these little ones loved her best ?

February 12.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be : but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.—
1 JOHN iii. 2, 3.

ARE angels my attendants ? Then I should walk worthy of my companionship. Am I soon to go and dwell with angels ? Then I should be pure. Are these feet to tread the courts of heaven ? Is this tongue to unite with heavenly beings in praising God ? Are these eyes to look on the throne of eternal glory and on the ascended Redeemer ? Then these feet, and eyes, and lips should be pure and holy, and I should live for heaven.

ALBERT BARNES.

A RHYME SIX HUNDRED YEARS OLD.

Guard, my child, thy tongue
That it speak no wrong ;
Let no evil word pass o'er it,
Set the watch of truth before it,
That it speak no wrong ;
Guard, my child, thy tongue.

Guard, my child, thine eyes,
Prying is not wise ;
Let them look on what is right,
From all evil turn their sight ;
Prying is not wise,
Guard, my child, thine eyes.

Guard, my child, thine ear,
Wicked words will sear ;
Let no evil word come in
That may cause thy soul to sin ;
Wicked words will sear,
Guard, my child, thine ear.

Ear, and eye, and tongue
Guard, while thou art young,
For, alas ! these busy three
Can unruly members be ;
Guard, while thou art young,
Ear, and eye, and tongue.

February 13.

He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely.—PROV. x. 9.

I SAY, stand with anybody that stands right. Stand with him while he is right, and part with him when he goes wrong.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

CONSOLATION.

When Molly came home from the party to-night,—
The party was out at nine,—
There were traces of tears in her bright, blue eyes,
That looked mournfully up to mine.

For some one had said,—she whispered to me,
With her face on my shoulder hid,—
Some one had said (there were sobs in her voice),
That they didn't like something she did.

So I took my little girl up on my knee,
(I am old and exceedingly wise),
And I said, "My dear, now listen to me,
Just listen, and dry your eyes;

"This world is a difficult world, indeed,
And people are hard to suit,
And the man who plays on the violin,
Is a bore to the man with the flute.

"And I, myself, have often thought
How very much better 'twould be,
If every one of the folks that I know
Would only agree with me;

"But, since they will not, the very best way
To make the world look bright,
Is, *never to mind what people say,*
But to do what you think is right."

WALTER LEARNED.

February 14.

Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.—
JOB v. 7.

THERE are plenty of things to fret about. It is simply astonishing how much annoyance may be found, in the course of every day's living, even at the simplest, if one only keeps a sharp eye out on that side of things. Even holy writ says we are prone to trouble as sparks fly upward. But even to the sparks flying upward in the blackest of smoke, there is a blue sky above; and the less time they waste on the road, the sooner they will reach it. Fretting is all time wasted on the road.

HELEN HUNT.

LITTLE CROSSES.

Vexing little trials
Often hedge our way ;
Little calls for patience
Meet us every day ;

Yet we always rule them
With our chosen mood ;
They may work us evil,
Or may do us good.

If we meet them fretting,—
Into griefs they swell ;
But they turn to blessing,
If we bear them well.

EMMA F. WYMAN.

February 15.

Keep thy heart with all diligence ; for out of it are the issues of life.—PROV. iv. 23.

How truly is a kind heart a fountain of gladness,
making everything in its vicinity to freshen into smiles !

WASHINGTON IRVING.

THE FOUNTAIN,

Into the sunshine,
Full of the light,
Leaping and flashing
From morn till night !

Into the moonlight,
Whiter than snow,
Waving so flower-like
When the winds blow !

Into the starlight,
Rushing in spray,
Happy at midnight,
Happy by day !

Ever in motion,
Blithesome and cheery,
Still climbing heavenward,
Never aweary ;

Glad of all weathers,
Still seeming best,
Upward or downward,
Motion, thy rest ;

Full of a nature
Nothing can tame,
Changed every moment,
Ever the same ;

Ceaseless aspiring,
Ceaseless content,
Darkness or sunshine
Thy element ;

Glorious fountain !
Let my *heart* be
Fresh, changeful, constant,
Upward, like thee !

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

February 16.

Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.—I PETER ii. 21.

CHRIST asks that our love should *resemble* His, if it cannot *equal* it. A pearl of dew cannot hold the sun, but it may hold a spark of its light. A child by the sea, trying to catch the waves, cannot hold the ocean in a tiny shell, but he can hold a drop of the ocean water.

JOHN STANFORD.

THE BEAUTIFUL OLD STORY.

Oh, the beautiful old story !
 Of the little child that lay
In a manger, on that morning
 When the stars sang in the day ;
 When the happy shepherds kneeling
 As before a holy shrine,
 Blessed God and the tender mother
 For a life that was divine.

Oh, the pleasant peaceful story !
 Of the youth, who grew so fair,
In His father's humble dwelling,
 Poverty and toil to share,
 Till, around Him, in the temple,
 Marveling, the old men stood,
 As, through His wise innocence,
 Shone the meek boy's angelhood.

Oh, the wonderful, true story !
 Of the messenger from God,
Who among the poor and lowly,
 Bravely and devoutly trod,
 Working miracles of mercy,
 Preaching peace, rebuking strife,
 Blessing all the little children,
 Lifting up the dead to life.

Oh, the sad and solemn story !
 Of the cross, the crown, the spear,
Of the pardon, pain, and glory
 That have made this Name so dear.
 This example let us follow,
 Fearless, faithful to the end,
 Walking in the sacred footsteps
 Of our Brother, Master, Friend.

LOUISA M. ALCOTT.

February 17.

But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you : for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.—I THESS. iv. 9.

I HAVE a new baby-brother, and I cannot help singing all the time, for joy. The little hands, even to the tiny

nails on the finger-tips, are perfectly beautiful ; and his cheeks are as soft as rose-leaves. His eyes are bright, and mamma says he will soon learn to look at me and smile and coo. How I do love him ! I am sure we shall love each other as long as we live.

WHAT SHALL WE WRAP THE BABY IN ?

What shall we wrap the baby in ?
Silks are too coarse, and velvets too rough,
Snowiest linens not half white enough,
Web of right fineness no fairy can spin,—
What shall we wrap the baby in ?

Softest of colors may cover his bed,
Delicate hues of the sky and the rose,
Tints of all buds that in May-morns unclose,
When on the bosom of sleep drops his head ;
He must have something more heav'nly instead.

What shall we wrap the baby in ?
Nothing that fingers have woven will do ;
Looms of the heart weave love ever anew ;
Love, only love, is the right thread to spin ;
Love, we must wrap the baby in.

LUCY LARCOM.

February 18.

What shall we do, that we might work the works of God ?—JOHN vi. 28.

How am I to know what God wants me to do every day ? By keeping in close, loving companionship with Him, and desiring Him to tell you, moment by moment, what to do and what to say ; by asking Him to lead you ; by doing each thing in love for Him, so that you can afterwards say : “ I did this to please Him ; I took this way in love for Him ; I acted thus, because it seemed that that would please Him most.

DAVID C. COOK.

SOMETHING TO DO.

There is something on earth for the children to do,—
For the child that is striving to be
Like the One who once murmured, in accents of love,
“ Let the little ones come unto Me.”

There are sweet, winning words, to the weary and sad,
By their glad, loving lips to be said ;
There are hearts that are waiting, by some little hand
Unto Jesus the Lord to be led.

There are lessons to learn both at school and at home ;
There are battles to fight for the right ;
There's a watch to be kept over temper and tongue,
And God's help to be asked, day and night.

There are smiles to be given, kind deeds to be done,
Gentle words to be dropped by the way ;
For the child that is seeking to follow the Lord,
There is something to do every day.

February 19.

Jesus of Nazareth . . . who went about doing good.—ACTS. x. 38.

HAVE you ever noticed how much of Christ's life was spent in doing kind things,—in *merely* doing kind things? Run over it with that in view, and you will find that He spent a great proportion of His time simply in making people happy, in doing good turns to people.

There is only one thing greater than happiness in the world, and that is holiness, and it is not in our keeping ; but what God *has* put in our power is the happiness of those about us, and that is largely to be secured by our being kind to them.

“ The greatest thing,” says some one, “ a man can do for his Heavenly Father, is to be kind to some of His other children.” I wonder why it is that we are not all kinder than we are! How much the world needs it! How easily it is done!

HENRY DRUMMOND.

WORSHIP.

* * * * *

O brother man ! fold to thy heart thy brother ;
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there ;
To worship rightly is to love each other,—
Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.

Follow with reverent steps the great example
Of Him whose holy work was "doing good" :
So shall the wide earth seem our Father's temple,—
Each loving life, a psalm of gratitude.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

February 20.

Serve the Lord with gladness.—Psa. c. 2.

"GRANDMA wants to know, Susie, what makes you look so bright and cheery all the time," said Arthur.

"Why, I *have* to," said Susie ; "you see, papa has been sick a long time, and mamma is tired out with nursing, and baby is fretful with her teeth, and if *I* were not cheery, who would be?"

"Yes, yes, I see," said dear old grandma, putting her arm around this little beam of sunshine. "That's *God's* reason for things ; they are, because somebody needs them. Shine on, little sun ; there couldn't be a better reason for shining than because it is dark at home."

LITTLE SUNBEAM.

O, would you be a sunbeam,
In this fair world of ours,
To give forth life and gladness,
And waken up the flowers ?
Do deeds of winning kindness
To dear ones 'round your hearth,
But think amidst your sweet home-love,
Of lonely ones on earth.

And in your loving mission
 Let none forgotten be ;
Let insect, bird, and flower
 Be cared for tenderly ;
And thus shall you be truly
 A little sunbeam bright,
To shine with perfect loveliness,
 And fill your home with light.

February 21.

Be courteous.—I PET. iii. 8.

TRUE politeness is real kindness, kindly expressed.

GEORGE L. CAREY.

A lady and her little daughter were shopping. Soon, a lady, elegantly dressed, handed her waterproof and umbrella to the young girl in charge. "Take care of those things until I call for them," she said, and went away. The bright eyes of the child followed her. "Why, mamma," she whispered, "she didn't even say please."

By and by, the lady returned, and said,—"I will take my things." There was some little delay in finding them.

"I hope you haven't lost or misplaced them," she said, in a severe tone, to the girl.

"No, here they are." The lady took them coolly, and, without a word, walked off. This was more than the child could stand. Leaning over, so that her sweet young face came close to that of the girl-clerk, she said sweetly,—"*Thank you!*"

Our Dumb Animals.

GOLDEN KEYS.

A bunch of golden keys is mine
 To make each day with gladness shine ;

"Good-morning!"—that's the golden key
 That unlocks every day for me ;

When evening comes, "Good-night" I say,
And close the door of each glad day;

When at the table, "If you please"
I take from off my bunch of keys;

When friends give anything to me
I'll use the little "Thank you" key;

"Excuse me," "Beg your pardon," too,
When, by mistake, some harm I do;

Or, if unkindly harm I've given,
With "Forgive me,"—I shall be forgiven.

On a golden ring, these keys I'll bind;
This is its motto:—"Be ye kind."

February 22.

He that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.—
PROV. XV. 15.

CHEERFULNESS can become a habit, and habits sometimes help us over hard places. A cheerful heart seeth cheerful things. A lady and gentleman were in a timber-yard situated by a dirty river. The lady said, "How good the pine boards smell!"

"Pine boards!" exclaimed the gentleman; "just smell this foul river!"

"No, thank you," the lady replied; "I prefer to smell the pine boards."

And she was right. If we can carry this principle through our entire living, we shall have the cheerful heart, the cheerful voice, and cheerful face.

DINAH MARIA MULOCK.

THE CHEERFUL VOICE.

I love to hear a cheerful voice
Outringing clear and free;
As floats the music of the winds
Across the sunny sea.

The cheerful voice goes hand in hand
With happiness and mirth ;
And, at its silver-toned command
Joy nestles 'round each hearth.

The cheerful voice bespeaks a heart
With noble feelings warm ;
One that will nobly do its part
In sunshine and in storm.

The music of a cheerful voice
Sets aged hearts aglow,
The smiles gleam o'er the wrinkled brow
Like sunset on the snow.

Then let the cheerful voice ring out
Upon the balmy air :
And let its gladness put to rout
The bold intruder,—*Care.*

February 23.

Pray without ceasing.—I THESS. v. 17.

You need God's care and help as much when you are walking to school, or playing at recess, or when you come home, as when you lie down to sleep.

When you are troubled, when you are tempted to be cross, to say wrong things, just send from your heart a prayer to God, to help you, and, when He does help you, say "thank you" to Him, as you would to any one who does something for you, and see if that kind of praying does not bring to you the blessing of a better and happier life. It is good to close the day, as to begin it, with words of love to the Father above, just as you give them, or ought to give them, to the dear father in your earthly home; but I am certain that if the "good-night" and the "good-morning," given to father and mother, are hearty, loving words, you will not fail to speak to them, from time to time, through the day, when you are with them. The child who never came to his father, except with the "good-night," and *that* said in a hurry, would not be counted a very loving child.

A PRAYER.

Lord, teach a little child to pray,
And oh ! accept my prayer ;
Thou canst hear all the words I say,
For Thou art everywhere.

A little sparrow cannot fall,
Unnoticed, Lord, by Thee ;
And though I am so young and small,
Thou dost take care of me.

Teach me to do whate'er is right,
And, when I sin, forgive ;
And make it still my chief delight
To serve Thee, while I live.

Hymns for Mothers and Children.

February 24.

I, Jesus, . . . am the bright and morning star.—
REV. xxii. 16.

WHEN you look at a star, at night, let it whisper to you that Jesus Christ is our light and guide. He came, like the “bright and morning star,” to shine in a dark world, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

LUCY WHEELOCK.

STARS.

The golden glow is paling
Between the cloudy bars ;
I'm watching in the twilight
To see the little stars.
I wish that they would sing to-night
Their song of long ago ;
If we were only nearer them,
What might we hear and know !

Are they the eyes of angels,
That always wake to keep
A loving watch above us,
While we are fast asleep?
Or are they lamps that God has lit
From His own glorious light,
To guide the little children's souls
Whom He will call to-night?

We hardly see them twinkle
In any summer night,
But in the winter evenings
They sparkle clear and bright.
Is this to tell the little ones
So hungry, cold, and sad,
That there's a shining home for them
Where all is warm and glad?

More beautiful and glorious,
And never cold and far
Is He who always loves them,—
The “Bright and Morning Star.”
I wish those little children knew
That holy, happy Light!
Lord Jesus, shine on them, I pray,
And make them glad to-night.

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

¹ “When the morning stars sang together.”—Job. xxxviii. 7.

February 25.

Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?—HEB. i. 14.

PRAYER is the door, forever open between earth and Heaven. Sooner than sound can reach a human ear through this lower atmosphere, the longing desire of the spirit rises to the heart of the Father. We are living in an invisible world, where our wishes are understood before our words are spoken.

LUCY LARCOM.

SWEDISH MOTHER'S HYMN.

There sitteth a dove, so white and fair,
 All on the lily spray,
 And she listeneth how to Jesus Christ
 The little children pray ;
 Lightly she spreads her friendly wings,
 And to Heaven's gate hath sped,
 And unto the Father in Heaven she bears
 The prayers which the children have said.

And back she comes from Heaven's gate,
 And brings,—that dove so mild,—
 From the Father in heaven who hears her speak,
 A blessing on every child.
 Then, children, lift up a pious prayer,—
 It hears whatever you say,
 That heavenly dove, so white and fair,
 All on the lily spray.

FREDERIKA BREMER.

(Translated by Mary Howitt.)

February 26.

*But now thus saith the Lord that created thee,
 Fear not, for I have redeemed thee ; I have called thee
 by thy name ; thou art Mine.—ISA. xliii. 1.*

*He telleth the number of the stars ; He calleth them all
 by their names.—PSA. cxlvii. 4.*

To know that we belong to God, that He loves us, that He is our father and friend,—this is the sunshine within. . . . Let us live, as we may in the sunshine without ; also, as we can, in the sunshine within.

JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.

CANST THOU COUNT THE STARS?

Canst thou count the stars that nightly
 Glisten in the azure sky ?
 Canst thou count the clouds that lightly
 Every day go floating by ?
 God, the Lord, the number knoweth
 Of the wonders that He showeth
 In their countless multitude.

Canst thou count the insects playing
In the sunshine's golden light?
Canst thou count the fishes straying
In the sparkling waters bright?
God, the Lord, a name hath given
To all creatures under heaven,
When He called them into light.

Canst thou count how many children
Go to little beds at night,
Sleeping there so warm and cozy
Till they wake at morning's light?
God, the Lord, each name can tell,
Knows them all and loves them well,—
God, the Lord, each name can tell.

From the German.

February 27.

Come and see the works of God.—Psa. lxvi. 5.

DOWN in the dark, damp earth, under the snow, under the withered leaves, the little seeds are sleeping. Little brown seeds! If we could look into the ground, they would seem to us dry and dead. But

“—— where man sees but withered leaves,
God sees the sweet flowers growing.”

If we could watch, we should see, by and by, a swelling of the little brown husks, as the spring sunshine warms the earth and the spring rain waters it. We should see tiny shoots peep out of their little prisons, and grow up into the light and air. Then we could stand beside them in the sunshine, and see the bundles of soft green leaves unfold, and dainty buds form, and sweet blossoms burst into beauty. Is it not wonderful,—this work of God? And shall we not love Him who made all these things to give us pleasure, and to make us think of Him?

INTO THE LIGHT.

“Where are the snow-drops?” said the Sun ;
“Dead,” said the Frost,—
“Buried and lost! buried and lost, every one ! ”
“A foolish answer!” said the Sun ;
“They did not die ;
Asleep they lie,—every one,—every one,
And I will wake them,—I, the Sun,
Into the light,
All clad in white,—every one, every one ! ”

A. MATHESON.

February 28.

For our heart shall rejoice in Him, because we have trusted in His holy name.—Psa. xxxiii. 21.

SPRING will come again, and under its warm breath the earth will be clothed with beauty. Have patience, little flower-lovers ! God never forgets to send the delicate, sweet arbutus-blossoms to the hillside, and the daisies and buttercups to the meadow, and all the “gentle race of flowers” to gladden your eyes and hearts. Trust Him, and be glad !

BETWEEN WINTER AND SPRING.

That weary time which comes between !
The last snow and the earliest green !
One barren clod the wide fields lie,
And all our comfort is the sky.

We know the sap is in the tree.
That life at buried roots must be ;
Yet dreary is the earth we tread,
As if her very soul were dead.

Before the dawn,—the darkest hour !
The blank and chill, before the flower !
Beauty prepares this background gray,
Whereon her loveliest tints to lay.

Ah, patience ! ere we dream of it,
Spring's fair new gospel will be writ ;
Look up ! good only can befall,
While Heaven is at the heart of all !

LUCY LARCOM.

February 29.

In your patience possess ye your souls.—LUKE xxi. 19.

PATIENT little plant, hidden in the damp dark ground,
God will not forget you. His gentle spring rains will
soon reach your tiny roots, His sunshine will warm you
into new life, and you shall blossom in beauty by and by.
Teach me your sweet lesson of patience. When things
look dark and unpleasant, let me cheerfully and trustingly
wait God's time, and the sunshine will surely come.

THE CROCUS' SOLILOQUY.

Down in my solitude under the snow,
Where nothing cheering can reach me,—
Here, without light to see how to grow,
I'll trust to Nature to teach me.

I will not despair, nor be idle, nor frown,
Locked up in so gloomy a dwelling ;
My leaves shall run up, and my roots shall run
down,
While the bud in my bosom is swelling.

Soon as the frost will get out of my bed,
From this cold dungeon to free me,
I will peep up with my bright little head,
And all will be joyful to see me.

Then from my heart will young petals diverge,
As rays of the sun from their focus ;
I, from the darkness of earth will emerge,—
A happy and beautiful crocus.

Gayly arrayed in my yellow and green,
When to their view I have risen,
Will they not wonder how one so serene,
Came from so dismal a prison ?

Many, perhaps, from so simple a flower,
This little lesson may borrow,—
Patient to-day, through its gloomiest hour,
We come out the brighter, to-morrow.

HANNAH F. GOULD.

March 1.

And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men.—COL. iii. 23.

THE thoroughly great men are those who have done everything thoroughly, and who have never despised anything, however small, of God's making.

JOHN RUSKIN.

WHAT MARCH DOES.

In the dark silence of her chambers low
March works out sweeter things than mortals know ;

Her noiseless looms ply on with busy care,
Weaving the fine cloth that the flowers wear ;

She sews the seams in violet's queer hood,
And paints the sweet arbutus of the wood ;

Out of a bit of sky's delicious blue,
She fashions hyacinths and harebells too ;

And from a sunbeam makes a cowslip fair,
Or spins a gown for a daffodil to wear ;

She pulls the cover from the crocus beds,
And bids the sleepers lift their drowsy heads :

“ Come, early risers ! Come, Anemone,
My pale Wind-flower, awake, awake ! ” calls she,—

“The world expects you, and your lovers wait
To give you welcome at spring’s open gate.”

She marshals the close armies of the grass,
And polishes their green blades as they pass :

And all the blossoms of the fruit-trees sweet
Are piled in rosy shells about her feet.

Within her great alembic she distils
The dainty odors which each flower fills ;

Nor does she err, and give to mignonette
The perfume that belongs to violet ;

Nature does well whatever task she tries
Because obedient ; there the secret lies.

MAY RILEY SMITH.

March 2.

To everything there is a season.—ECCL. iii. 1.

WAIT a little, wait hopefully ! No matter how long the winter may have been, the spring comes at last, and its loveliness is all the more welcome to our eyes because they have looked so long on gray skies, and fields white with snow.

ROBIN'S MESSAGE.

Hastening northward, a message to bear,
Coming while snowflakes yet dance in the air,

Robin is herald of spring ;

“Cheer up ! ” he chants,—“ be the winds e’er so chill,
Spring-time comes soon over valley and hill,
Cheer up, cheer, cheer up ! ” he sings with a will ;
Bravest of prophets of spring.

“Under warm blankets the leaf-buds are hid,
 Baby-buds, sleeping, will waken, when bid,”
 Clear calls the robin again ;
 “Sunshine will waken the sleepers below
 Brown, furry robes, or white blankets of snow ;
 Bright, smiling faces with warm life will glow,”
 Sings the glad prophet of spring.

“Spring-time and seed-time, and harvest ne’er fail,
 Trust in the promise, tho’ bleak winds prevail,
 Cheer up ! ” rings out his refrain :
 “One speaks the promise who holds in His hands
 All things in nature,—One who commands
 Clouds as His chariots, sunlight for lands
 Waiting for warmth of the spring.”

FANNIE L. HALL.

March 3.

*Thou makest it soft with showers : thou blessest the
 springing thereof.*—PSA. lxv. 10.

HERE or there, in the full time comes the full blessing ;
 the flower flashing out glory, the fields laughing with
 plenty.

ROBERT COLLYER.

THE LITTLE SEEDS.

“Tiny seeds, tiny seeds, under the ground,
 Are you awake, when the storm-winds sound ?
 How do you know when the snowflakes throng ?
 What do you dream of, the winter long ?”

“Little one, little one, warm is our bed,
 Soft is the coverlet over each head ;
 Sometimes we dream of the birds and the bees,
 The blue, sunny sky, and green, waving trees.
 Spring may come early or late ;
 Through dark Winter’s blight
 We’ll creep to the light ;
 So we wait, little one,—so we wait.”

“ Tiny seeds, tiny seeds, do ye not miss
The soft, sighing breeze, and the sunbeam’s kiss ?
The chirp of the cricket, in noonday heat,
All that made summer fair and sweet ? ”

“ Little one, little one, we are content,
We may not see,—but the sky’s o’er us bent !
Soon will the tap of the whispering rain
Tell that the Giver needs us once again.
Then, be it early or late,
For each flake of snow
A flower will grow !
So we wait, little one,—so we wait.”

GEORGE COOPER.

March 4.

My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up.—Psa. v. 3.

We love to praise God, because He loveth to bless us ;
we thank Him for life, because it is a pleasant thing to
be alive.

ANNA L. BARBAULD.

GOOD-MORNING.

“ O, I am so happy ! ” a little girl said,
As she sprang, like a lark, from her low trundle-bed;
“ ‘Tis morning, bright morning ; good-morning, papa !
O give me one kiss for good-morning, mamma :
Only just look at my pretty canary,
Chirping his sweet good-morning to Mary.
The sun is peeping straight into my eyes,—
Good-morning to you, Mister Sun, for you rise
Early, to wake up my birdie and me,
And make us as happy as happy can be.”

“ Happy you may be, my dear little girl ; ”
And the mother stroked softly each clustering curl :
“ Happy you can be; but think of the One,
Who wakened this morning both you and the sun.”

The little girl turned her bright eyes with a nod ;
" Mamma, may I say ' good-morning ' to God ? "

" Yes, little darling one, surely you may ;
Kneel, as you kneel every morning to pray."

Mary knelt solemnly down, with her eyes
Looking up earnestly into the skies ;

And two little hands, that were folded together,
Softly she laid on the lap of her mother :—
" Good-morning, dear Father in Heaven," she said ;
" I thank Thee for watching my snug little bed ;
For taking good care of me all the dark night,
And waking me up with the beautiful light.
O, keep me from naughtiness all the long day,
Dear Saviour, who taught little children to pray ! "

An angel looked down in the sunshine and smiled,
But she saw not that angel,—that beautiful child !

March 5.

Teach me to do Thy will : for Thou art my God.—
Psa. cxliii. 10.

*All Thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord.—*Psa.
cxlv. 10.

In the morning, O God, will I praise Thee ! Through the night Thou has preserved Thy child and I dedicate my first waking thoughts to Thee in gratitude. The little birds sing praises, all nature rejoices in the glad light of day, and shall I, who have received so many blessings, be silent and unmindful ? No, I will join with them in praise and thanksgiving to my Heavenly Father, and then go forth to the duties and pleasures of the day.

Matins and Vespers.

MORNING HYMN.

O Father, Thou art near,—so near
Thy children while they work or play,
Thine arms enfold us tenderly,—
O help us please Thee, day by day !

The little flowers—we love them so,—
Along the hillside and the dell,
With faces fair upturned to Thee,
Sweetly to us Thy goodness tell.

The little birds that love to trill
Their music over, morn and night,—
The breaking waves along the shore,
Teach us to praise Thee with delight.

The snowflakes, dropping down from heaven
So swiftly and so silently,
The lilies, gleaming on the lake,
Teach us Thy spotless purity.

Father, all things together sing,—
The earth below, the skies above,
And all the airs that 'round us breathe,—
The fulness of Thy watchful love.

Nature in Verse.

March 6.

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.—2 TIM. ii. 15.

“WHAT if our plans are interfered with, after we have done our best?” some one dolefully asks. Ah! that does not concern us! We are only to do our best.

THE BLIND WEAVER.

A blind boy stood beside the loom
And wove a fabric. To and fro
Beneath his firm and steady touch
He made the busy shuttle go.

And oft the teacher passed that way
And gave the colors, thread by thread;
And by the boy the pattern fair
Was all unseen,—its hues were dead.

"How can you weave?" we, pitying, cried;
The blind boy smiled,—"I do my best;
I make the fabric firm and strong,
And one who sees does all the rest."

Oh, happy thought! beside life's loom
We blindly strive our best to do,
And He who marked the pattern out
And holds the threads,—will make it true.

BETH DAY.

March 7.

Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God: Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.—Psa. cxlvii. 7, 8.

EVERMORE rejoicing on their way, through all varieties of accident, of climate, and of place, whether as snow or hail, as showers or dews, as floods or springs, as rivers or as seas,—the waters are still obediently "fulfilling His word," who called them into being; and are carrying the everlasting circle of blessing around the world. Oh, ye showers and dew; oh, ye winds of God; oh, ye ice and snow; oh, ye seas and floods; verily, even when *man* is mute and forgetful, *ye* bless the Lord, *ye* praise Him, and magnify Him forever!

MARGARET GATTY.

PREPARATION.

Over all the raindrops fall,
The wind is wildly crying;
Did we judge by sight, we should say to-night,—
The sad old world is dying.

But the raindrops nourish the rose's root,
The wind the earth is preparing
For the summer's beauteous miracle,—
And the birds are homeward faring.

MARY F. BUTTS.

March 8.

Cast me not off in the time of old age ; forsake me not when my strength faileth.—PSA. lxxi. 9.

POLITENESS is to do or say the kindest thing in the kindest way.

SOMEBODY'S MOTHER.

The woman was old, and ragged, and gray,
And bent with the chill of the winter's day ;

The street was wet with a recent snow,
And the woman's feet were aged and slow ;

She stood at the crossing, and waited long,
Alone, uncared-for, amid the throng

Of human beings, who passed her by,
Nor heeded the glance of her anxious eye.

Down the street, with laughter and shout,
Glad in the freedom of " school let out ! "

Came the boys, like a flock of sheep,
Hailing the snow, piled white and deep ;

Past the woman, so old and gray
Hastened the children on their way,

Nor offered a helping hand to her,
So weak, so timid, afraid to stir

Lest the carriage wheels or the horses' feet
Should crowd her down in the slippery street.

At last, came one of the merry troop,—
The gayest laddie of all the group,—

He paused beside her, and whispered low,
" I'll help you across, if you wish to go ! "

Her aged hand on his strong young arm
She placed, and so, without hurt or harm,

He guided the trembling feet along,
Proud that his own were firm and strong ;

'Then back again to his friends he went,
His young heart happy, and well content.

" She's somebody's mother, boys, you know,
For all she's aged, and poor, and slow ;

" And I hope some fellow will lend a hand
To help *my* mother, you understand,

" If ever *she's* poor, and old, and gray,
When her own dear boy is far away."

And "somebody's mother" bowed low her head
In her home, that night, and the prayer she said,

Was,—"God, be kind to the noble boy,
Who is somebody's son, and pride, and joy!"

March 9.

As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.—ISA. lxvi. 13.

A CHILD, speaking of his home, to a friend, was asked,
"Where is your home?" Looking with loving eyes at
his mother, he replied, " *Where mother is.*"

MOTHER'S LOVE.

What is there down so deep
But mother's love will find it?
Cover it over and hide it well,
Neither with lips, nor by glances tell;
Have you a trouble? Wherever it dwell,
Mother's love finds it out.

What is there up so high,
But mother's love can share it ?
All that is noble, and good, and true,—
That which enriches and blesses you,—
What you accomplish, and purpose to do ;
Mother's love shares it all.

Is anything too hard
For mother to do for you ?
No, obstacles vanish, and cares grow light,
Dangers diminish, and clouds become bright,
Burdens grow smaller, and roll out of sight
For mother, when doing for you.

March 10.

Know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind.—1 CHRON. xxviii. 9.

THE smallest things become great when God requires them of us ; they are small only in themselves ; they are always great when they are done for God, and when they serve to unite us to Him eternally.

FRANÇOIS FENELON.

SERVING.

A tiny shell
Upon the white sea-sand
Where great waves tell
Of wrecks along the strand ;
No eyes may see
Its use where waters curve,
Yet, lowlily,
The Father it doth serve.

The stars of night,
Than it how far more grand !
Yet in His might
Who holds all in His hand,
That shell has place,
Or else it were not here
To yield a grace
Within its humble sphere.

A little child,
Beside the great, vast sea,
Whose billows wild
Reach to eternity,—
What can it do,
So helpless and so weak?
The ways seem few
To give Him service meek.

Oh, greater far
Than ocean in its might,
Or radiant star,
Thy soul within His sight!
With kindly deed,
And loving thoughts, to fill
Some earthly need;
'Tis thine to serve Him still!

GEORGE COOPER.

March 11.

Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in My name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.—MARK ix. 41.

GIVE, because you love to give,—as the flower pours forth its perfume.

CHARLES SPURGEON.

SIMPLICITY.

Take, Lord, the little I can do;
For love counts nothing small,
And lowly service serveth true
In gladly giving all.

To stay one weary heart in pain,
One cheering word to say,
To help one sufferer sing again,
Sufficeth for the day.

In simple errands, silent praise,
And pure obedience trod,
So, one by one, shall all my days
Be hid with Christ in God.

M. WOOLSEY STRYKER.

March 12.

Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.—
MARK xiv. 38.

“WHAT is conscience?” said a Sunday-school teacher, one day, to the little flock that gathered around her to learn the word of life.

Several of the children answered, one saying one thing, and another, another, until a little timid child spoke out:—

“*It is Jesus whispering in our hearts.*”

Happy the child who listens to the loving whisper!

THE BOY AND HIS CONSCIENCE.

Boy.

“Over the fence is a garden fair,—
How I would love to be master there!
All that I lack is a mere pretense,
I could leap over the low, white fence.”

Conscience.

“This is the way that all crimes commence ;
Sin and sorrow over the fence.”

Boy.

“Over the fence I can toss my ball,
Then go in for it,—that is all ;
Picking an apple up, under the tree,
Would not be really a theft, you see.

Conscience.

“This is a falsehood,—a weak pretense ;
Sin and sorrow over the fence.”

Boy.

“Where is the voice that speaks so plain?
Twice have I heard it, and not in vain ;
Never will I venture to look that way,
Lest I should do as I planned to-day.”

Conscience.

“This is the way that all crimes commence,
Coveting that which is over the fence.”

March 13.

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper : but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.—
PROV. xxviii. 13.

To do so no more is the truest repentance.

MARTIN LUTHER.

SORROW FOR SIN.

‘Tis not enough to say
“We’re sorry and repent,”
Yet still go on from day to day
Just as we always went.

Repentance is to leave
The sins we loved before,
And show that we in earnest grieve
By doing so no more.

Lord, make us thus sincere
To *watch* as well as *pray* ;
However small, however dear,
Take all our sins away.

ANN TAYLOR.

March 14.

*If any man's work abide, which he hath built thereupon,
he shall receive a reward.—I COR. iii. 14.*

Two young masons were building a brick wall,—the front wall of a high house. One of them, in placing a brick, discovered that it was a little thicker on one side than on the other. His companion advised him to throw it out.

“It will make your wall untrue, Ben,” he said.

“Pooh!” answered Ben, “what difference will such a trifle as that make? You are too particular.”

“My mother,” replied he, “taught me that truth is truth, and ever so little an untruth is a lie, and a lie is no trifle.”

“O,” said Ben, “that's all very well; but I am not lying, and have no intention of lying.”

“Very true, but you make your wall tell a lie, and I have read that a lie in one's work is like a lie in his character,—it will show itself sooner or later, and bring harm, if not ruin.”

“I'll risk it in this case,” answered Ben, and he worked away, laying more bricks, and carrying the wall higher, till the close of the day, when they went home.

The next morning they went to their work, when, behold, the lie had wrought out the result of all lies.

The wall, getting a little slant from the untrue brick, had grown more and more untrue as it grew higher, and at last, in the night, had toppled over.

Just so with ever so little an untruth in your character; it grows more and more untrue, if you permit it to remain, till it brings sorrow and ruin. *Tell, act, and live the exact truth always.*

BUILDING.

We are building every day
In a good or evil way;
And the structure, as it grows,
Will our inmost self disclose,

Till in every arch and line
All our faults and failings shine ;
It may grow a castle grand,
Or a wreck upon the sand.

Do you ask what building this
That can show both pain and bliss,
That can be both dark and fair?
Lo, its name is *character*.

Build it well, whate'er you do ;
Build it straight, and strong, and true ;
Build it clean, and high, and broad ;
Build it for the eye of God !

I. E. DIEKENGA.

March 15.

In Gibeon, the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream, by night : and God said, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, . . . O Lord my God, Thou hast made Thy servant king instead of David my father : and I am but a little child : I know not how to go out or come in. . . . Give therefore Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and bad : for who is able to judge this Thy so great a people?—I KINGS iii. 5, 7, 9.

HEAVENLY Father, I am a helpless little child, and Thou art our Heavenly Father. I am not a little child half as much as I should like, in truthfulness and simplicity, but I am a little child in wanting Thee,—in being able to do nothing without Thee. Not because I am childlike, Heavenly Father, but because I am helpless,—help me ; not because I love Thee (and yet I do love Thee), but because Thou lovest me,—because Thou diedst for my sins, help and save me.

From Diary of Kitty Trevylyan.

SOLOMON'S WISE CHOICE.

In visions of the night,
If God should speak to me,—
Should stand before my eager sight
And bid me ask what things I might,
What would my answer be?

Should I, too, have the grace
As did this one of old,
To ask,—not life and length of days,
Nor earthly power, nor human praise,
Nor shining heaps of gold?

Should I be quick to say,—
“ I am a little child ;
Alone, I cannot find my way ;
If left alone, I go astray,
In paths of sin beguiled ? ”

Should I the prayer repeat,—
“ Thy grace, O God, impart,
Give me a temper, mild and sweet,
A spirit easy to entreat,—
An understanding heart ? ”

I. N. TARBOX.

March 16.

In the multitude of words, there wanteth not sin : but he that refraineth his lips is wise—PROV. x. 19.

WE have only one mouth, but two ears; whereby nature teaches us that we should speak little, but hear much.

ZENO.

(*A Greek philosopher, born in Cyprus, 355 years before Christ.*)

Silence is golden. The flowers have no tongues. I do not mean that you must not talk. God has given us tongues, and means us to use them; but let the silent beauty of the flowers teach us to do all the good we can with sweetness and quiet grace.

WILLIAM BURNETT WRIGHT.

TWO AND ONE.

Thou hast two ears and but one mouth,—
Remember it, I pray!
For much there is that thou must hear,
And little say.

Thou hast two eyes, and but one mouth,—
Ponder and reason well!
Full many things thou art to see,
And few things tell.

Thou hast two hands, and but one mouth,—
Nature hath rightly done;
For she hath given two for work,—
For eating, one.

From the German of Ruckert.

March 17.

Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child—1 SAM. ii. 18.

THERE is a story of a poor, tired mother who took her three little children into a parlor-car by mistake, and was rudely driven into another car, in a way that brought smiles to some faces, but a great pity into the tender heart of a little boy. He showed his sympathy in true boyish fashion by taking some of his fruit and luncheon to the abashed little group in the common car. . . . So sweet and gentle was the ministry of the bright-faced, beautiful boy, that one of the children asked, “Was he an angel, mamma?”

“No, dear, but he was doing an angel’s work, bless him,” answered the mother.

Is there not a little bit of angel’s work for each one of us, every day, no matter how commonplace the day may be? Perhaps you are not quite sure just what an angel’s work is, but a little searching of the Scripture will make it clear. And, having found what the work is like, suppose we, each one, watch diligently for such pieces of it as may lie in our path.

HYMN.

God make my life a little light,
Within the world to glow,—
A little flame that burneth bright,
Wherever I may go.

God make my life a little flower,
That giveth joy to all ;—
Content to bloom in native bower
Although its place be small.

God make my life a little song,
That comforteth the sad ;
That helpeth others to be strong,
And makes the singer glad.

God make my life a little staff
Whereon the weak may rest,—
That so what health and strength I have
May serve my neighbor best.

God make my life a little hymn
Of tenderness and praise,—
Of faith, that never waxeth dim,
In all His wondrous ways.

Good Words.

March 18.

Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green.—JER. xvii. 7, 8.

WE should seek to make our lives straight, and true, and healthful, and beautiful, because that is what they were meant to be ; just as a tree grows upright, and broad, and leafy, because it is the natural thing for it to do. Think how deep it must send its roots to draw nourishment for all that verdure,—how wide and free its

arms are spread to catch the health-giving air, and sun, and rain ! This is what you should be,—always ready to draw good from whatever of the good and beautiful is around, above, beneath you.

HELEN B. BOSTWICK.

LITTLE BY LITTLE.

“ Little by little,” an acorn said,
As it slowly sank in its mossy bed,
“ I am improving every day,
Hidden deep in the earth away.”

Little by little each day it grew,
Little by little it sipped the dew ;
Downward it sent out a thread-like root,
Up in the air sprang a tiny shoot.

Day after day, and year after year,
Little by little, the leaves appear,
And the slender branches spread far and wide,
Till the mighty oak is the forest’s pride.

“ Little by little,” said a thoughtful boy,
“ Moment by moment I’ll well employ ;
Learning a little every day
And not spending all my time in play ;
And still this rule in my mind shall dwell,
‘ Whatever I do, I’ll do it well.’

“ Little by little, I’ll learn to know
The treasured wisdom of long ago,
And one of these days perhaps we’ll see
That the world will be the better for me.”
And do you not think that this simple plan
Made him a wise and useful man ?

March 19.

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish but have everlasting life.—JOHN iii. 16.

Therefore I love Thy commandments above gold ; yea, above fine gold.—PSA. cxix. 127.

WHY do we need the Bible in order to know about God? Do not the stars, and the sun, and the earth tell us that there must be a God who made all these wonderful things and rules them? Yes, they tell us that God is powerful, and very great, but they do not tell us that He loves us. . . . This Book is the story of God's love. It is the story of Jesus, our Saviour.

JOHN H. BARROWS.

THE VAUDOIS TEACHER.

“O lady fair, these silks of mine are beautiful and rare,—
The richest web of the Indian loom, which beauty's queen
might wear;
And my pearls are pure as thy own fair neck, with whose
radiant light they vie;
I have brought them with me a weary way,—will my
gentle lady buy ?”

And the lady smiled on the worn old man, through the
dark and clustering curls
Which veiled her brow, as she bent to view his silks and
glittering pearls;
And she placed their price in the old man's hand, and
lightly turned away,—
But she paused at the wanderer's earnest call,—“ My
gentle lady, stay !”

“O lady fair, I have yet a gem which a purer lustre flings,
Than the diamond flash of the jeweled crown on the lofty
brow of kings,—
A wonderful pearl of exceeding price, whose virtue shall
not decay,
Whose light shall be as a spell to thee, and a blessing on
thy way !”

The lady glanced at the mirroring steel where her form
of grace was seen,
Where her eye shone clear, and her dark locks waved,
their clasping pearls between,—
Bring forth thy pearl of exceeding worth, thou traveler,
gray and old,
And name the price of thy precious gem, and my page
shall count thy gold,”

The cloud went off from the pilgrim's brow, as a small
and meagre book,
Unchased with gold or gem of cost, from his folding robe
he took ;
"Here, lady fair, is the pearl of price,—may it prove as
such to thee !
Nay,—keep thy gold ! I ask it not,—for the Word of God
is free ! "

The hoary traveler went his way, but the gift he left be-
hind
Hath had its pure and perfect work on that high-born
maiden's mind ;
And she hath turned from the pride of sin to the lowliness
of truth,
And given her human heart to God, in its beautiful hour
of youth.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

March 20.

I will love Thee, O Lord my strength.—Psa. xviii. 1.

A LITTLE girl gave some flowers to a friend. When he asked her why she gave them to him, she said : "Because I love you." "Do you bring any little gifts to Jesus?" said he.

"Oh," said the little child,—"I give *myself* to Him."

He who gives himself to God gives himself into safe keeping.

GOD LOVES ME.

God cares for every little child
That on this large earth liveth :
He gives them home, and food and clothes,—
And more than these, God giveth :

He gives them all their loving friends,
He gives each child its mother ;
He gives them all the happiness
Of loving one another ;

He makes the earth all beautiful ;
He makes thine eyes to see ;
And touch, and hearing, taste and smell,—
He gives them all to thee.

What can a little child give God ?
From His bright Heaven above
The great God smiles, and reaches down
To take His children's love.

Hymns for Children.

March 21.

The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.—Psa. x. 4.

A SABBATH-SCHOOL teacher once asked her class if there was any place where God was not. A little girl answered,—“He is not in the thoughts of the wicked, for the Bible says that God is not in all their thoughts.”—Our Heavenly Father gives us new gifts every day. They are, as the Bible says, “new every morning”; they are more than any one can number. “How precious are Thy thoughts towards me, O God!” says David; “how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand.” And yet, not only careless boys and girls, but men and women who think themselves wise and good, and who would not receive a single gift from a friend without at least saying, “thank you”—live in the midst of all these reminders of God’s presence and thoughtfulness, and goodness, and still God is not in all their thoughts.

LYMAN ABBOTT.

GOD WITH US.

Oh, not in distant Palestine
Is Jesus found to-day ;
But close beside each one of us
To dwell with us alway.

They always find, who seek Him,
 He never will depart
 From any loving child of His ;
 He dwells within your heart.

March 22.

Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop ; but a good word maketh it glad.—PROV. xii. 25.

I CULTIVATE cheerfulness with might and main. I hang prisms in my windows to catch the sunshine, and I look at all the pretty pictures in the shop-windows. There is so much necessary sadness in the world, that I try, in every way I can, to make it bright.

LYDIA M. CHILD.

CHEERFULNESS.

There is a little maiden,—
 Who is she ? Do you know ?
 Who always has a welcome
 Wherever she may go.

Her face is like the May-time,
 Her voice is like the bird's ;
 The sweetest of all music
 Is in her lightsome words.

* * * *

Each spot she makes the brighter,
 As if she were the sun ;
 And she is sought and cherished,
 And loved by every one ;

By old folks and by children,
 By lofty and by low :
 Who is this little maiden ?
 Does any body know ?

You surely must have met her,—
 You certainly can guess :
 What ! must I introduce her ?
 Her name is,—*Cheerfulness !*

March 23.

Be content with such things as ye have.—HEB. xiii. 5.

THE best things are nearest: breath in your nostrils, light in your eyes, flowers at your feet, duties at your hand, the path of God just before you.

Then do not grasp at the stars, but do life's plain, common work as it comes, certain that daily duties and daily bread are the sweet things of life.

COMPLAINING MARCH.

March, if you'll hush a moment
Your shrill, wild voice, you'll hear
A silvery bluebird piping
Within your very ear;
And streams that know about the spring
In spite of all the clouds you bring.

You cry for pleasant weather,
For warmth and sunny light;
You wail because of Winter,
But he has taken flight;
With driving sleet you pelt the hours;
Be still, and you shall know of flowers!

You'll feel the buds' quick heart-beats,
Which still in prison you hold,—
They sorely long for freedom,
But fear your blighting cold,—
And, with a glad thrill 'gainst your breast,
The home-bound swallow's airy crest.

Pray brush away the wind-clouds
That dim your sight, and look
Where crowds of happy cowslips,
Are stirring by the brook,
And alder tassels show their gold,
And reeds, like soldiers tall and bold,

Equipped to march for summer,
Have their green flags unfurled ;
And by the brown hedge hiding,
Eyes, bluest in the world,
Are ready, any morn, to ope,
If you should smile, and give them hope.

Oh, souls like yours, full many
On this old earth there be,
Who will not cease complaining
Even long enough to see
The very gifts for which they cry,
Close, close within their pathway lie.

SUSAN HARTLEY SWETT.

March 24.

Freely ye have received, freely give.—MATT. x. 8.

A GENEROUS mind never enjoys its possessions so much
as when others are made partakers of them.

SIR WILLIAM JONES.

VIOLETS.

Violets, violets, sweet March violets,
Sure as March comes, they'll come too ;
First the white, and then the blue,—
Pretty violets !

White, with just a pinky dye,
Blue, as little baby's eye
So like violets.

Though the rough wind shakes the house,
Knocks about the budding boughs,—
There are violets.

Though the passing snow-storms come,
Frightening all the birdies dumb,—
Up spring violets.

One by one, among the grass,
Saying, "Pluck me!" as we pass,—
Scented violets.

By and by there'll be so many
We'll pluck dozens, nor miss any ;
Sweet, sweet violets !

Children, when you go to play,
Look beneath the hedge to-day ;
Mamma likes violets.

DINAH MARIA CRAIK.

March 25.

He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty ; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.—PROV. xvi. 32.

WHAT is it to be a gentleman ? It is to be honest, to be gentle, to be generous, to be brave, to be wise, and, possessing all these qualities, to exercise them in the most graceful outward manner.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.

A BETTER WAY.

He lost the game ; no matter for that,—
He kept his temper, and swung his hat
To cheer the winners. A better way
Than to lose his temper, and win the day.

March 26.

Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.—PSA. xcvi. 11.

A GOOD deed in the morning strews the day's path with roses.

A word of kindness is seldom spoken in vain ; it is a seed, which, dropped by chance, springs up a flower.

IN THE MORNING.

A little thing, a sunny smile,
A loving word, at morn,
And all day long the sun shone bright,
The cares of life were made more light,
And sweetest hopes were born.

A little thing, a hasty word
A cruel frown, at morn,
And aching hearts went on their way
And toiled throughout a dreary day,
Disheartened, sad, and lorn.

C. L. HILL.

March 27.

Redeeming the time.—EPH. v. 16.

LOST, yesterday, somewhere between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes !

No reward is offered, for they are gone forever.

HORACE MANN.

Thou shalt always have joy in the evening, if thou hast spent the day well.

THOMAS A KEMPIS.

A LOST DAY.

Who's seen my day?
'Tis gone away,
Nor left a trace
In any place.
If I could only find
Its footfall in some mind,—
Some spirit-waters stirred
By wand of deed or word,—
I should not stand at shadowy eve,
And for my day so grieve and grieve.

March 28.

A man's wisdom maketh his face to shine.—ECCL. viii. 1.

CONTINUAL thought upon beautiful things, silently brings forth a beautiful spirit.

HENRY T. BAILEY.

TWO MAIDENS.

I know a winsome little maid
 So fair to see,—
Her face is like a dainty flower,
 So lovingly
She looks upon this world of ours
 And all who pass;
That sweet content makes beautiful
 My little lass.

I know another maiden well,—
 She might be fair,—
Her cheek is like a rose-leaf soft,
 Like gold her hair;
But, ah, her face is marred by frowns,
 Her eyes by tears,
For none can please. I dread to think
 Of coming years.

Would you, dear, grow to beauty rare
 In thought and deed?
Then learn the lesson these two teach
 To those who heed,
And, in your heart, as life begins,
 Give this truth place:
'Tis only lovely thoughts can make
 A lovely face.

GERTRUDE M. CANNON.

March 29.

They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep. For He commandeth, and

raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths : their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet ; so He bringeth them unto their desired haven. Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men !—PSA. cvii. 23-31.

ON THE OCEAN.

We were crowded in the cabin,
Not a soul would dare to sleep,—
It was midnight on the waters,
And a storm was on the deep.

So we shuddered there in silence,—
For the stoutest held his breath,
While the hungry sea was roaring,
And the breakers talked with Death.

And, as thus we sat in darkness,—
Each one busy in his prayers,—
“ We are lost ! ” the captain shouted,
As he staggered down the stairs.

But his little daughter whispered,
As she took his icy hand,—
“ Isn't God upon the ocean
Just the same as on the land ? ”

Then we kissed the little maiden,
And we spoke in better cheer,
And we anchored safe in harbor,
When the morn was shining clear.

JAMES T. FIELDS.

March 30.

Thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid.—
JOB xi. 19.

“HE keepeth thee”; only think who is your Keeper! the mighty God, who can do everything, and can see everything. Why need you ever fear, with such a Keeper? It is very nice to know that “He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee,” but it is sweeter and grander still to think that God Himself keeps us. As if He wanted us to be very sure of it, and to leave us no excuse for ever being afraid any more, He even says it three times over:—“He that keepeth thee will not slumber.” “Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.” “The Lord is thy Keeper.”

What could He say more?

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

GOD IS NEAR.

I will not fear,
For God is near,
Through the dark night,
As in the light;
And while I sleep
Safe watch will keep;
Why should I fear,
When God is near?

Hymns for Little Ones at Home.

March 31.

And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.
ISA. lxv. 24.

LITTLE Nellie was talking to herself in a low tone, one day, and, through the half-opened door, her mother

heard these words:—“ When I say my prayers, God says, ‘ Hark, angels ! while I hear a little prayer ! ’ Then the angels will keep very still for a few moments, till I say ‘ amen. ’ ”

Is not this a sweet thought ? I wonder if those who read this story have ever thought how wonderful it is that God always hears their prayers. He is surrounded by thousands and thousands of angels, all singing and praising Him with their golden harps ; and yet, through all the music and all the praises, He hears the softest prayer of a little child.

Child at Home.

DAY IS OVER.

Now the day is over,
Night is drawing nigh,
Shadows of the evening
Steal across the sky.

Jesus, give the weary
Calm and sweet repose,
With Thy tenderest blessing
May our eyelids close.

Grant to little children
Visions bright, of Thee ;
Guard the sailors tossing
On the deep blue sea.

Comfort every sufferer
Watching late in pain ;
Those who plan some evil,
From their sin restrain.

Thro' the long night-watches
May Thine angels spread
Their white wings above me,
Watching 'round my bed.

When the morning wakens,
Then may I arise
Pure, and fresh, and sinless,
In Thy holy eyes.

Amen.

SABINE BARING-GOULD.

April 1.

O Lord, open Thou my lips, and my mouth shall shew forth Thy praise.—Psa. li. 15.

I WOULD be like a little bird which the wind rocks on a branch beneath the mild rays of the sun, and whose voice ascends unceasingly to the blue heaven.

FRIEDRICH RUCKERT.

IN APRIL.

The air is soft and balmy,
The grass is growing green,
The maple-buds are swelling,
Till their slender threads are seen.
The brown brook chatters gayly
Its rippling course along,
And hark!—from distant tree-top
I hear the bluebird's song !

O joyous, gladsome carol,
Exultant, fearless, true !
There is hidden a heavenly message
'Neath that coat of heavenly blue.
My heart thrills, as I listen :
God's love is sure and strong ;
Thank Him for life's awakening !
Praise for the bluebird's song !

After the winter,—springtime,
The sunshine follows rain ;
Tho' grief and sorrow chill us,
The heart grows warm again.
From earth to His glad Heaven,
God will His loved ones bring ;
Still, after frosts and snowdrifts,
We hear the bluebirds sing.

EMILY GAIL ARNOLD.

April 2.

Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.
—LUKE xii. 6, 7.

IF God planned all the great events, and left the little things to chance, we should be very unhappy; but the loving kindness of God, while it gilds the whole landscape with the sunlight, also has a beam for the tiniest insect, and a ray of light for the smallest bird.

WHAT THE APRIL BREEZE SAID TO THE TREES.

Wake up, wake up, you pretty buds, and shake your green capes out,
The winter frosts have fled away,—the spring sun peeps about,
The singing birds will soon be here, with clear and cheering lays,—
They'll want your leaves for parasols, to shield them from your rays;
You'll have your flounces none too soon to shade the passer-by;
The tender grass and flowers, too, would soon all withered lie,
If your broad leaves were not unfurled, to screen old Sol's bright beams.
Then, to your work! and I, to mine,—I go to warm the streams
That now are wandering down the hills, and murmuring thro' the dell,
To add their songs of praise to Him who "doeth all things well."

KEITH SAINT JOHN.

April 3.

The tender grass sheweth itself.—PROV. xxvii. 25.

THE grass is soft to our feet, and a clear brook washes the roots of the trees. The sloping bank is covered with

flowers ; let us lie down upon it ; let us throw our limbs on the fresh grass and sleep ; for all things are still, and we are quite alone. The cattle can lie down to sleep in the cool shade, but we can do what is better ; we can raise our voices to Heaven ; we can praise the great God who made us.

ANNA LÆTITIA BARBAULD.
1743-1825.

THE SONG OF THE GRASS.

Here I come, creeping, creeping everywhere :
By the dusty roadside,
On the sunny hillside,
Close by the noisy brook,
In every shady nook,
I come creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come, creeping, creeping everywhere :
All around the open door,
Where sit the aged poor,
There where the children play,
In the bright and merry May,
I come creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come, creeping, creeping everywhere :
In the noisy city street,
My pleasant face you'll meet,
Cheering the sick at heart,
Toiling his busy part,
Silently creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come, creeping, creeping everywhere :
You cannot see me coming,
Nor hear my low, sweet humming,
For in the starry night,
And the glad morning light,
I come quietly, creeping everywhere.

Here I come, creeping, creeping everywhere :
More welcome than the flowers
In summer's pleasant hours ;
The gentle cow is glad
And the merry bird not sad
To see me creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come, creeping, creeping everywhere :
My humble song of praise
Most gratefully I raise
To Him, at whose command
I beautify the land,
Creeping, silently creeping everywhere.

SARAH ROBERTS.

April 4.

Fire and hail; snow and vapors; stormy wind fulfilling His word.—Psa. cxlviii. 8.

Make me to go in the path of Thy commandments.—Psa. cxix. 35.

WE are too fond of our own will. We want to be doing what we fancy mighty things ; but the great point is, to do small things, when called to them, in a right spirit.

RICHARD CECIL.

WORK.

“ Sweet wind, fair wind, where have you been ? ”
“ I’ve been sweeping the cobwebs out of the sky ;
I’ve been grinding a grist in the mill hard by ;
I’ve been laughing at work while others sigh ;
Let those laugh who win ! ”

“ Sweet rain, soft rain, what are you doing ? ”
“ I’m urging the corn to fill out its cells ;
I’m helping the lily to fashion its bells ;
I’m swelling the torrent, and brimming the wells ;
Is that worth pursuing ? ”

“ Redbreast, redbreast, what have you done ? ”
“ I’ve been watching the nest where my fledglings lie ;
I’ve sung them to sleep with a lullaby ;
By and by, I shall teach them to fly,
Up and away, every one ! ”

“ Honey-bee, honey-bee, where are you going ? ”
“ To fill my basket with precious pelf ;
To toil for my neighbor as well as myself ;
To find out the sweetest flower that grows,
Be it a thistle, or be it a rose,—
A secret worth the knowing ! ”

Each content with the work to be done,
Ever the same from sun to sun,—
Shall you and I be taught to work
By the bee and the bird, that scorn to shirk?

“Wind and rain fulfilling His word!”
Tell me, was ever a legend heard
Where the wind, commanded to blow, deferred,
Or the rain, that was bidden to fall, demurred?

MARY N. PRESCOTT.

April 5.

He watereth the hills from His chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Thy works.—Psa. civ. 13.

A DULL, dreary rain kept Nanie at home from school and from sliding down hill on her new sled, and from every single thing she wanted to do,—so she thought.

“I was going to try how very good I could be at school, and how much I could do for other people,—and now there's nothing to do, and nothing to be good about!”

“Don't you believe that!” said her papa; “here's this rain to be good about, in the first place; then I am ready to have many things done for me.”

“What things, papa?”

“O, pleasant things; I should like a bright, happy face to look at, now and then, and I want to hear a glad, merry voice around the house, instead of one which is a little bit sharp and cross.”

“But, papa, these are such little bits of things, they aren't big enough to do, and they don't make me feel as if I had done anything, after all.”

“Nanie,” said papa, “what should we want to do right for,—to please whom?”

“God,” said Nanie, softly.

“Well, now, God has made it rain, so you can't go to school and do great things; you can't build a house, but you can help to make one very bright; you can't make a door, but you can shut it softly, so it won't jar auntie's

aching head, and God thinks more of the *softly*, than He does of the *door*. Try it, little daughter, for this one day; keep on the watch every minute and ask God to show you the bits of things to say and do."

Nanie went up to her room, knelt down by her little bed, and said: "Please, God, help me to find very little things to do, and to like to do them." . . . "Papa," she said, when the study lamp was lighted, and she sat beside him, giving him her account of the day;—"I tried to do things just because they were right,—for nothing else; but they grew pleasant to do."

WHEN IT RAINS.

Do? Like the things in the garden; oh,
Just keep quiet a while and grow!

Do? Like the bird; it shuts its wings
And waits for the sun. Do you hear? It sings!

Do? Like the lilies; let it beat!
Nestle below it, and be sweet.

April 6.

He hath done all things well.—MARK vi. 37.

"How unkind!" murmured a golden crocus, as the flakes of snow fell fast and thick upon it. "How very unkind!" said a company of seedlings that were briskly putting up their little green heads, which the soft flakes soon covered. "How unkind!" said the bronze buds of the lilac. "How very unkind! just as we were opening to the sun that shone so kindly on us;" and they complained till the fleecy burden hid them, one by one. And there was a white world. Then came the stern frost from the north, and the little fountains were sealed, and the snow over all things shone like a crystal case, and the bitter east wind raged fiercely, and all was silence, except where its dismal voice was heard. But it was hushed at last, and the sun came gently forth, and

the soft and genial west winds blew and the streamlets were free again, and the crystal dissolved, and the snow beneath sank quietly, gradually into the earth, saying to the complaining buds and blossoms,—

“Farewell! I sheltered you from the stern frost; I protected you from the angry blast. My work is so far done. Now, I go down to soften and enrich the earth, that you may be sustained and refreshed. When you have drunk in all its blessings, and are rejoicing in fulness of strength and beauty, remember me, whom you received with reproaches and endured with impatience, and acknowledge that He who approves my plan and work as well as yours, is the faithful Friend who always works to a good end.”

A “BLACKBIRD SNOW.”

When the first violet oped its mild, blue eye,
'Mid leaves all brown and sere,
A world of gladness seemed therein to lie;
We felt that spring was here.

But, ah! the ground to-day is white with snow,
The twittering birds have fled,—
And, overborne with cold and wintry woe,
The violet lies dead.

What visions sweet, of bird, and bee, and flower,
Have vanished in a night,—
Of tinkling brook, and grove, and leafy bower,
And fields with blossoms bright!

Not all the crocus' gold one smile can buy
To ease her of her pain;
Prisoned and dark, the budding life must lie,
Since snow is come again.

But lo! a blackbird rings this joyous peal:—
“O blessing of the snow!
From closed lids it lifts the last dark seal
And bids the flowerets blow!”

FANNY BEULAH BATES.

April 7.

And I will cause the shower to come down in His season.—EZEK. xxxiv. 26.

The Lord hath been mindful of us: He will bless us.—Psa. cxv. 12.

DOES God ever forget to send the beautiful spring-time? Did He not say, more than four thousand years ago,—“While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease”? And His promise has been kept all these many years. He remembers not only to awaken the little roots and seeds with His rain and sunshine, but to call the birds to build their nests, and to rouse some of the sleepy animals from their winter naps, that they may all join in the gladness of spring. He remembers with tenderest love every little child, and, to show His love, gives him “all things bright and beautiful,” to enjoy, and to remind him of his Heavenly Father.

WAITING TO GROW.

Little white Snowdrop, just waking up,
Violet, Daisy, and sweet Buttercup!
Think of the flowers that are under the snow,
Waiting to grow!

And think what hosts of queer little seeds,—
Of flowers and mosses, of ferns and weeds,—
Are under the leaves, and under the snow,
Waiting to grow!

Think of the roots getting ready to sprout,
Reaching their slender brown fingers about,
Under the ice and the leaves and the snow,
Waiting to grow.

Only a month or a few weeks more,
Will they have to wait behind that door;
Listen and watch,—for they are below,—
Waiting to grow.

Nothing so small, or hidden so well
That God will not find it, and very soon tell
His sun where to shine, and His rain where to go,
To help them to grow !

FRANK FRENCH.

April 8.

The Lord reigneth ; let the earth rejoice ; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.—Psa. xcvi. 1.

The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.—Psa. cxxvi. 3.

WHAT a beautiful thought that God, who is so wise and good, is watching lovingly over every one of us, in this great world which He has made !

He sends bright clouds and glad sunshine, sweet flowers and singing birds, and blessings more than we can count, to remind us that He loves us, and to make us happy and good. Let us be glad that we have such a Father in heaven, and let us love Him as He loves us.

PIPPA'S SONG.

The year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn ;
Morning's at seven,
The hillside's dew-pearled ;
The lark's on the wing ;
The snail's on the thorn :
God's in His Heaven,—
All's right with the world.

ROBERT BROWNING.

April 9.

I have loved you, saith the Lord.—MAL. i. 2.

WE should have expected God to say, “I *will* love you if you will love Me.” But no ! He says, “I *have*

loved you." Yes, He has loved you already, poor little restless heart, that wants to be loved ! He loves you now, and will love you always. . . . It is *true*, and you need only believe it, and be glad of it, and tell Him how glad you are that He loves you.

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

AT EASTER-TIME.

We're all of us glad at the Easter-time,
For the children sing, and the church-bells chime ;
The earth has put off her mantle of snow,
And the sky is bright, and the soft winds blow ;
The little leaves play
With the sunbeams gay,
And we all know why,—it is Easter-day !

We're all of us glad at the Easter-time,
For deep in our souls the joy-bells chime ;
For the Saviour who loved us and died for our sin,
Through the gates of glory hath entered in ;
And His heart above
Is throbbing with love,
And His Spirit comes down, as the Holy Dove.

E. E. HEWITT.

April 10.

But Jesus called them unto Him, and said : Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not ; for of such is the kingdom of God.—LUKE xviii. 16.

"JESUS CHRIST, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Yes, the very same to you to-night that He was to the little children when He took them up in His arms and blessed them. Not a bit different ! Just as kind, just as loving, just as ready to take you up too, and bless you, and keep you always "safe in the arms of Jesus."

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

THE EASTER SONG.

A tender lily raised its head,
And on the air its fragrance shed ;
Its dainty cup was white and fair,
As if God's smile had rested there ;
And, as it upward held its face
Toward heaven's blue ethereal space,
It sang a song to God's dear Son,—
"All praise to Thee, Thou mighty One ! "

A little bird paused in its flight,
And held its head toward the light,
And sang a song so sweet and clear
That all the flow'rs turned 'round to hear,
And all the sunbeams stopped their play
To listen to the joyful lay ;
And this it sang to God's dear Son :—
"All praise to Thee, Thou holy One ! "

A little child, with spirit meek,
And heart that tried God's truth to seek,
Lifted her tiny hands on high,
And all the angels in the sky
Silenced their harps to hear the song
That mounted up, so sweet and strong ;
And this she sang to God's dear Son,—
"All praise to Thee, Thou loving One ! "

And up in heaven, the risen King
Had heard the bird and lily sing,
And He had murmured, "It is well
That they abroad My glories tell ;"
But when He heard the little child,
His tones grew sweet, and then He smiled,
And said,—"All praise to her be given,
For of such little ones is Heaven ! "

ALICE G. STEELE.

April 11.

That which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be, but a bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other kind; but God giveth it a body even as it pleased Him, and to each seed a body of its own.—

1 COR. xv. 37, 38.

MEN can do some very wonderful things, but no man has ever been able to create even the simplest form of animal or vegetable life. The story is told of a very skilful chemist, who said that he could make a kernel of corn just as good as those God makes. He took some corn, analyzed it carefully to find out just what it was composed of, and then set to work to make more like it. After a while, he triumphantly produced a quantity of corn which looked exactly like kernels of real corn just shelled from the ear. It contained the same elements, too, as the real corn. Why was it not just as good? A friend proposed a test.—Some of it was given to a number of fowls, while an equal number were fed with natural corn. All those who ate the artificial grain soon died, while the others lived and thrived. Then some of it was planted in rows, and side by side with them other rows of real corn. The latter sprouted and grew, in time producing other corn, but nothing came of the chemist's. It did not have the germ of life within it, which God alone can implant, and therefore it could not grow and reproduce itself. It had not stood the test. It was useless for the purposes for which corn is intended, and only showed how far man's greatest skill and art fall short of God's work, in nature.

THE SEED.

Little and black, shining and round ;
Bury it deep, under the ground,
Cover it up and go away,
And come again another day.
Little black thing, without any power,—
God will change it into a flower!

April 12.

I will be as the dew unto Israel ; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.—Hos. xiv. 5.

Let them also that love Thy name be joyful in Thee ; for Thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous.—Psa. v. 11, 12.

God's children, guarded by His providence, sheltered by His love, watched over by His angels, kept by His grace, hopeful of His heaven, have a right to be happy.

At Dawn of Day.

Open your heart; open it without measure, that God and His love may enter without measure.

FRANÇOIS FENELON.

A LILY'S WORD.

My delicate lily,—
Blossom of fragrant snow,
Breathing on me from the garden,
How does your beauty grow?
Tell me what blessing the kind heavens give!
How do you find it so sweet to live?

“One loving smile of the sun
Charms me out of the mould;
One tender tear of the rain
Makes my full heart unfold.—
Welcome whatever the kind heavens give,
And *you* shall find it as sweet to live.”

LUCY LARCOM.

April 13.

Praise ye the Lord; for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely.—
Psa. cxlvii. 1.

Thine own friend and thy father's friend, forsake not.
—PROV. xxvii. 10.

WELCOME, little blossom of the spring-time! Thou seemest like a loving friend who has come back to me. God covered thee with a winter coverlet of snow to keep thy tiny roots alive, and now has sent the sun and showers to call thee up, and has dressed thee in dainty colors. All the flowers are my friends, and all the birds and squirrels and other happy things. They make me think

of God who made them. But, dearer than all are father and mother, and brother, and baby-sister, and grandmamma, and all the other friends God has given me. When I think how much I have to make me happy, I sing my little German song: —

“ I have father and mother, life and glee ;
So good has God been unto me.”

THE YELLOW VIOLET.

When beechen buds begin to swell,
And woods the bluebird's warble know,
The yellow violet's modest bell
Peeps from the last year's leaves below.

Ere russet fields their green resume,
Sweet flower, I love, in forest bare,
To meet thee, when thy faint perfume
Alone, is in the virgin air.

Of all her train, the hands of spring
First plant thee in the watery mould
And I have seen thee blossoming
Beside the snow-bank's edges cold.

Thy parent sun, who bade thee view
Pale skies, and chilling moisture sip,
Has bathed thee in his own bright hue,
And streaked with jet thy glowing lip.

Yet slight thy form, and low thy seat,
And earthward bent thy gentle eye,
Unapt the passing view to meet,
When loftier flowers are flaunting nigh.

Oft, in the sunless April day,
Thy early smile has stayed my walk ;
But, 'midst the gorgeous blooms of May,
I passed thee, on thy humble stalk.

So they, who climb to wealth, forget
The friends, in darker fortunes tried ;
I copied them,—but I regret
That I should ape the ways of pride.

And when again the genial hour
Awakes the painted tribes of light,
I'll not o'erlook the modest flower
That made the woods of April bright.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

April 14.

Why stand ye here all the day idle?—MATT. xx. 6.

DOING is the great thing. For if, resolutely, people do what is right, in time they come to like doing it.

JOHN RUSKIN.

A FAIRY STORY.

A LAZY girl, who liked to live in comfort, and do nothing, asked her fairy godmother to give her a good genius to do everything for her. On the instant, the fairy called ten dwarfs, who washed and dressed the little girl, and combed her hair, and fed her. All was done so nicely that she was happy except for the thought that they would go away.

“To prevent that,” said the godmother, “I will place them in your ten pretty little fingers.” And they are there yet!

BUSY AND HAPPY.

The careful winter was hardly gone,
And the careful spring was coming on ;
So much to manage, so much to make,
So many matters to undertake,—
It seemed to me that I had to do
More than ever I could get through.

But, walking along by the orchard wall,
Where the sopsavines in autumn fall,
On a rough, bare apple-bough overhead
Lit a little sparrow, and this he said,—
Telling of all he found to do
With a thankful gladness that thrilled me through :—
“ Sweet,—sweet,
Sweet,—sweet,—

Chipper, chipper, chipper, chipper,—chip !
 Oh what a merry, merry, busy, busy thing life is !
 Sweet,—sweet,
 Sweet,—sweet,—
 Hurry, hurry, hurry, hurry,—quick, quick, quick !
 There was never, never, such a busy time as this !
 The world to wake,
 And the nests to make !
 Sweet,—sweet !
 Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.
 We're all busy,—God's busy,
 God's happy,—we're all happy,
 For we're His."

ADELINE D. T. WHITNEY'S *Bird Talk.*

April 15.

Let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein.—1 CHRON.
 xvi. 32.

Behold the fig-tree and all the trees : when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.—LUKE xxi. 29, 30.

I OFTEN think flowers are the angels' alphabet, whereby they write, on hills and fields, mysterious and beautiful lessons for us to feel and learn.

PLATO.

SPRING FLOWERS.

The violets are coming
 To the valley,—on the plain ;
 And the birds will soon be humming,
 And the streams be free again.
 There are pretty budding faces
 In the dell, so pure and sweet,
 And a thousand tiny traces
 Of their little blue-veined feet.

The violets are coming,
 Ah ! how beautiful they grow !
 How quietly ! almost within
 The footprints of the snow.

And ever do they seem to me
 Most like, in gentle bloom,
A gift some loving hand hath flung
 Upon old Winter's tomb.

The violets are coming,
 Their buds are scarcely seen ;
But heaven wears a deeper blue,
 And earth a brighter green.
The leaves are all unclosing,—
 Our hearts grow full and strong,
For we hail them as a prelude
 To a long bright summer song.

The violets are coming
 There's a perfume on the air,
And a breath of early blossoms
 Uprising everywhere.
O, I love the summer flowers,—
 Each tiny, bright-lipped thing,
But, more than all, I dearly love
 The first sweet buds of spring.

April 16

The birds of the air have nests.—MATT. viii. 20.

WHAT a wonderful thing is a bird's nest, whether it be the pretty, round nest of the robin which builds in such a friendly way, close to our houses, or the queer nests of some other birds. One class of birds is called *miners*; they dig holes in the ground in which to make their nests. Some birds build on the ground; the night-hawks selecting a place about the color of their eggs, so that the eggs may not be so easily seen. We call one class of birds, *masons*, because they build their nests with walls of mud or clay. The baker-bird, of South America, makes a nest in the form of a baker's oven. Some, called carpenters, make holes in trees for their nests. The gros-beak swings its basket-nest from a twig over a running stream, with the door at the bottom. One kind of tailor-bird sews a dead leaf to a living one, and, between them,

makes its tiny nest. When we remember that the birds have no tools, nothing but their little feet and bill, with which to work, we wonder at the nice, comfortable beds they make for their babies, and we are sure that God alone taught them.

THE NEST-BUILDERS.

The green boughs rustle by my window,
The soft leaves tremble to and fro ;
A nest is growing in the shadow,—
I watch the builders come and go.

Out of the free, four winds of heaven,
The pretty hidden home is made ;
A straw, a twig, the down of thistle,
With moss and grasses overlaid.

I hear the light wings, flitting, flitting ;
They take no time for rest or play,
While falls the rain, or broods the sunlight,
The busy birds improve the day.

They gather up the gifts I throw them,
A silken thread, a ribbon end ;
Then come again, with pleasant twitter,
As if to thank, and call me friend.

No thanks, dear little merry workers !
I shall be doubly glad of spring,
When, by and by, beside my window,
The baby-birds begin to sing.

April 17.

And He took them (the little children) up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them.—MARK. x. 16.

“ If the Bible did not say that God is love, would we know it in any other way, mamma ? ” was the question little Clayton asked, as he read the text, “ God is love. ” His mamma told him to look out the open window and

tell her what he saw. . . . "I see pretty flowers in the garden, and the apple-trees covered with white and pink blossoms ; I see the blue sky, and the river yonder," he answered. Then his mother asked, "Who gives you the pure air to breathe, and sends the sunlight and dew upon the earth? Through whose love are you provided with home, and kind friends to care for you when you are ill? Who gave His dear Son to die that you might live?" "God," the little boy answered reverently ; "yes, we would know that 'God is love,' even if the Bible did not say so."

ELIZABETH P. ALLAN.

FLOWERS.

Buds and bells! Sweet April pleasures,
Springing all around,—
White, and gold, and crimson treasures
From the cold, unlovely ground !
He who gave them grace and hue,
Made the little children too.

When the weary little flowers
Close their starry eyes,
By the dark and dewy hours
Strength and freshness God supplies ;
He who sends the gentle dew
Cares for little children too !

Then He gives the pleasant weather,
Sunshine, warm and free ;
Making all things glad together,
Kind to them, and kind to me ;
Lovely flowers ! He loveth you,
And the little children too !

Though we cannot hear you singing
Softly chiming lays,
Surely God can see you bringing,
Silent songs of wordless praise !
Hears your anthem, sweet and true,
Hears the little children too !

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

April 18.

Awake to righteousness, and sin not.—I COR. xv. 34.

It was a little brown bulb down in the ground that had thrown up those beautiful flowers. The bulb had no beauty in itself; it might have said, "I am of no use, and I will lie still here in the ground and rest." Then no blooming time would have come to it, and the bright and graceful flowers would not have been born to gladden our eyes. But the bulb had gone on gathering strength and nourishing juices from the soil, and had been guarded from the worm, and now we enjoy the beauty of its bloom. Children are like bulbs, and if they are not idle and careless, but work in all things to gather in the right qualities for good and useful lives; and if they keep the worm of sin from eating out the germ of good from their hearts, they will surely find a blooming-time in this world and in the home above.

THEODORE H. MACK.

LITTLE GARDENS.

Little gardens may have room
For the fairest flowers that blow,
If the plants are tended well,
And no weed is left to grow.

So, in all our hearts may be
Little gardens, sweet and fair,
If we check the weeds of sin,
And keep goodness growing there.

EMELIE POULSSON.

April 19.

To him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward.
—PROV. xi. 18.

If the spring puts forth no buds or blossoms, in summer there will be no beauty, and in autumn no fruit.

A SONG.

Scatter in spring-time a handful of seeds,
And gather in summer a lapful of flowers ;
This is the song of the birds in the bowers,
This is the song of the wind in the reeds.

Down by the roadside and over the meads,
Under the sunshine and under the showers,
Scatter in spring-time a handful of seeds,
And gather in summer a lapful of flowers.

Scatter in childhood kind words and deeds,
Scatter them everywhere, through all the hours ;
Whether sky brightens, or whether cloud lowers,
Their blossoms shall come to thee ere summer speeds.
Scatter in spring-time a handful of seeds,
And gather in summer a lapful of flowers.

Harper's Second Reader.

April 20.

Thou hast put gladness in my heart.—Psa. iv. 7.

No matter if it is raining outside, let us try to make sunshine inside. Gather about the window and watch the rain as it comes down upon the grass,—and the showers as they water the earth ; look up and see clouds full of rain,—those “wandering cisterns in the sky,”—and remember who fills them with water to refresh the thirsty flowers, and shrubs, and trees, and to give drink to every thirsty creature. What music there is, as the pearly drops patter against the window-panes !

Among some of the ways to make sunshine, are :—First,—not to think of what might have been, if the day had been better. Second,—see how many pleasant things there are left to enjoy. Third,—do all you can to make others happy. Try this plan the next rainy day, and see if sunshine in the heart does not make sunshine everywhere.

SING.

Sing, little bird, when skies are blue ;
Sing, for the world has need of you ;
Sing when the skies are overcast,—
Sing through the raindrops, falling fast.

Sing, light heart, in sunny weather ;
Sing, dear heart, when storm-clouds gather ;
Sing a refrain, sweet, loving, true ;
Sing, for the world has need of you.

MARY E. CARTER.

April 21.

*A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance.—PROV.
XV. 13.*

A BRIGHT smile, a beaming countenance, a playful word,—these find an entrance into the closed heart, and raise the downcast eye, and bless him that gives and him that takes.

DEAN STANLEY.

SUNSHINE.

“ I wish the beautiful sun would shine
Every, every day,
Beaming over the whole great world,
And making it bright and gay.

“ I wish that every gloomy cloud
Would hurry and hide away,
Wherever it came from,—I don’t know
Nor care,—if they’d go and stay.

“ I wish, I wish,—but what is the use
Of wishing, I’d like to know !—
For grandmother says that clouds and shine
Will always come and go.

“ But wee little girls like me, she says,
Can smile, and smile, and smile,
Till every one who sees, will think
It is sunshine all the while !

“ I’d like to try it, but, don’t you see,
A bit of a smile like mine
Would reach such a very little way,
And make such a little shine !

“ But ah,—if every boy and girl
Would smile and smile, and see
How far they could make the brightness go,
How shiny the world would be ! ”

SYDNEY DAYRE.

April 22.

The Lord shall open unto thee His good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand.—DEUT. xxviii. 12.

FERTILIZING rains ! the words are easily spoken, but who knows their full meaning save he who has watched over corn-fields or vineyards threatened with ill-timed drought ? We take a great deal for granted in this world, and expect that everything, as a matter of course, ought to fit into our humors, and wishes, and wants ; and it is often only when danger threatens, that we awake to the discovery that the guiding reins are held by One whom we had well-nigh forgotten, in our careless ease.

MARGARET GATTY.

WE PLOUGH THE FIELDS.

We plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land,
But it is fed and watered by Thine almighty hand ;
From Thee the snow in winter, the warmth to swell the
grain,
The breezes and the sunshine, and soft refreshing rain.

Thou only art the Maker of all things near and far,
The tint upon the rose-leaf, the light within the star ;
The winds and waves obey Thee, the storms by Thee are
led,
On Thee all eyes are waiting, by Thee all creatures fed.

We thank Thee, O our Father, for all things bright and
good,
The seed-time and the harvest,—our life, our health, our
food.
All the good gifts around us are sent from Heaven above ;
Then thank the Lord, O thank Him, for all His tender
love.

*After MATTHIAS CLAUDIUS.
1740-1815.*

April 23.

*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His
benefits.—PSA. ciii. 2.*

HERE, close by us, are pure, sweet pleasures, without stint, that would refresh us. . . . These, our mother, Nature, has to offer to us ; this refreshment of heart is the soft, gentle, tender side of the care of the great Father, God. Train the eye to behold beauty, the heart to relish these simple but exquisite joys.

JAMES BALDWIN BROWN.

THE LILAC.

The lilac stood close to Elizabeth's window
All purple with bloom, while the little maid spun ;
Her stint was a long one, and she was a-weary,
And moaned that she never could get it done.

But a wind stirred gently the lilac-blossoms,
And a wonderful sweetness came floating in,
And Elizabeth felt, tho' she could not have said it,
That a friend had come to help her spin.

And after that, she kept on at her spinning
Gay as a bird,—for the world had begun
To seem such a pleasant, good place for working,
That she was amazed when her stint was done.

And the pale-browed little New England maiden
Outside her lessons, had learned, that day,
That the sweetness around us will sweeten labor,
If we will but let it have its way.

ST. NICHOLAS.

April 24.

Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times ; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming.—JER. viii. 7.

GOD seems to love to send us new delights, day after day, before we can tire of the old, so that we may be glad all 'round the year. The flowers come, in lovely procession,—arbutus, snowdrops and violets, lilies and roses, daisies and buttercups, asters and golden-rod. The birds, too, know their appointed time to come, and gladden us with their music,—bluebirds and robins, swallows, wrens, and bobolinks.

When flowers are asleep and birds have flown, autumn comes, with nuts and fruits, and red and yellow leaves and lovely Indian-summer days. Then winter brings the beautiful frost-crystals and the happy Christmas-time.

ROUND THE YEAR.

O beautiful world of green !
When bluebirds carol clear,
And rills outleap,
And new buds peep,
And the soft sky seems more near ;
With billowy green and leaves, what then ?
How soon we greet the red again !

O radiant world of red !
When roses blush so fair,
And winds blow sweet,
And lambkins bleat,
And the bees hum here and there :
With thrill of bobolinks,—ah, then,
Before we know,—the gold again !

O beautiful world of gold !
 When waving grain is ripe,
 And apples beam
 'Tho' the hazy gleam,
 And quails on the fence-rails pipe ;
 With pattering nuts, and winds,—why then,
 How swiftly falls the white again !

O wonderful world of white !
 When trees are hung with lace,
 And the rough winds chide,
 And the snowflakes hide
 In each unsheltered place ;
 When birds and brooks are dumb,—what then ?
 O, 'round we go to the green again !

GEORGE COOPER.

April 25.

My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord : and let all flesh bless His holy name forever and ever.
 —Psa. cxlv. 21.

THE buds spread into leaves, and the blossoms swell to fruit ; but they know not how they grow, nor who caused them to spring up from the bosom of the earth. Ask them if they will tell thee ; bid them break forth into singing, and fill the air with pleasant sounds. They smell sweet, they look beautiful ; but they are quite silent ; no sound is in the still air,—no murmur of voices amongst the green leaves.

The plants and the trees are made to give fruit to man ; but man is made to praise God, who made him.

ANNA LÆTITIA BARBAULD.

HYMN.

There's not a leaf within the bower ;
 There's not a bird upon the tree ;
 There's not a dewdrop on the flower,
 But bears the impress, Lord, of Thee

Thy Hand the varied leaf designed,
And gave the bird its thrilling tone ;
Thy power the dewdrop's tints combined,
Till, like the diamond's blaze, they shone.

Yes, dewdrops, leaves, and birds, and all, —
The smallest, like the greatest, things, —
The sea's vast space, the earth's wide ball,
Alike proclaim Thee, King of Kings.

But man alone, to bounteous Heaven
Thanksgiving's conscious strains can raise ;
To favored man alone 'tis given
To join the angelic choir in praise.

AMELIA OPIE.

April 26.

Behold my servants shall sing for joy of heart.—ISA.
lxv. 14.

A HAPPY heart transfigures all the world for us. It finds something to be thankful for in the barest circumstances, even in the night of sorrow. Let us train ourselves to see the beauty and the goodness in God's world, in our own lot, and then we shall stop grumbling, and all our experience shall start songs of praise in our heart.

JAMES R. MILLER.

A BIRD'S NEST.

Over my shaded doorway,
Two little brown-winged birds
Have chosen to fashion their dwelling
And utter their loving words ;
All day they are coming and going
On errands frequent and fleet,
And warbling, over and over,
"Sweetest, sweet, sweet, O sweet ! "

Their necks are changeful and shining,
Their eyes are like living gems ;
And all day long they are busy
Gathering straws and stems,

Lint, and feathers, and grasses,
 And half forgetting to eat,
 Yet never failing to warble,
 "Sweetest, sweet, sweet, O sweet!"

I scatter crumbs on the doorstep,
 And fling them some flossy threads ;
 They fearlessly gather my bounty,
 And turn up their graceful heads,
 And chatter, and dance, and flutter,
 And scrape with their tiny feet,
 Telling me, over and over,
 "Sweetest, sweet, sweet, O sweet!"

What if the sky is clouded ?
 What if the rain come down ?
 They are all dressed to meet it,
 In water-proof suits of brown.
 They never mope nor languish,
 Nor murmur at storm or heat,
 But say, whatever the weather,—
 "Sweetest, sweet, sweet, O sweet!"

Always merry and busy,
 Dear little brown-winged birds !
 Teach me the happy magic
 Hidden in those soft words,
 Which always, in shine or shadow,
 So lovingly you repeat,
 Over and over and over,
 "Sweetest, sweet, sweet, O sweet!"

FLORENCE PERCY.

April 27.

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.—GAL. V. 14.

WHAT is meant by our neighbor, we cannot doubt ; it is every one, he or she, whosoever it be, whom we have any means of helping.

DEAN STANLEY.

No one performs an act of kindness but plants a flower in his own heart.

HEAR IT AND WISH !

The herald note of summer days,—
How full and clear it rings!
“ Hark ! when you hear it, you must wish ”—
The year’s first robin sings.

What shall I wish ? Put by the thought
That looks to self alone ;
But, wishing for another’s good
Is praying for one’s own.

HOPE WHITTIER.

April 28.

*He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High
shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*—PSA.
xci. 1.

ONE evening when Luther saw a little bird perched on a tree, to roost there for the night, he said :—“ This little bird has had its supper, and now it is getting ready to go to sleep here, quite secure and content, never troubling itself what its food will be, or where its lodging on the morrow. Like David, it ‘ abides under the shadow of the Almighty.’ It sits on its little twig content, and lets God take care.”

SONG OF THE SPARROW.

I’m only a little sparrow,
A bird of low degree ;
My life is of little value,
But the dear Lord cares for me.

He gives me a coat of feathers :
It is very plain, I know,
Without a speck of crimson,
For it was not made for show.

But it keeps me warm in winter,
And it shields me from the rain ;
Were it bordered with gold and purple,
Perhaps it would make me vain.

And now that the spring-time cometh,
I will build me a little nest,
With many a chirp of pleasure,
In the spot I like the best.

I have no barn or storehouse,
I neither sow nor reap ;
God gives me a sparrow's portion,
And never a seed to keep.

If my meat is sometimes scanty,
Close pecking makes it sweet ;
I have always enough to feed me,
And life is more than meat.

I know there are many sparrows —
All over the world they are found ;
But our Heavenly Father knoweth
When *one* falls to the ground.

Though small, we are not forgotten,
Though weak, we are not afraid ;
For we know that the dear Lord keepeth
The life of the creatures He made.

I fly through the thickest forest,
I alight on many a spray ;
I have no chart nor compass,
But I never lose my way.

I just fold my wings at nightfall,
Wherever I happen to be ;
For the Father is always watching :
No harm can happen to me.

I am only a little sparrow
A bird of low degree,
But I know that the Father loves me ;
Dost thou know His love for thee ?

April 29.

Be not weary in well doing.—2 THESS. iii. 13.

You know that if you have a plant, in a flower-pot,

the earth gets dry in a day or two. This is chiefly because the water in the earth is sucked up by the roots, and runs up all through the plant, and goes out of the pores of the leaves and blossoms. The leaves may be said to be breathing moisture into the air all the time. This moisture makes the air soft, while the fragrance of the flowers makes it balmy. Each leaf yields but a little water, and so does but little good in this way. But there are so many leaves that a great deal of water comes from all of them. It puts me in mind of the Scotch proverb :—“ Many a little makes a muckle.” Those who want to do good in the world may learn a lesson from the leaves. Every child, in doing little kind things, may, like the small leaf, do its part of the good that is to be done in the world. And if much of the good that he does is not noticed by others, God sees it all, just as He sees all the moisture that is breathed out by each little leaf.

WORTHINGTON HOOKER.

LINES FOR A LITTLE LASSIE.

Suppose a little cowslip
Should hang its golden cup,
And say, “ I’m such a little flower,
I’d better not grow up,”—
How many a weary traveler
Would miss its fragrant smell !
How many a little child would grieve
To lose it from the dell !

Suppose the glistening dewdrop,
Upon the grass, should say,
“ What can a little dewdrop do ?
I’d better roll away ; ”
The blade on which it rested,
Before the day was done,
Without a drop to moisten it,
Would wither in the sun.

How many deeds of kindness
A little child may do,
Although it has so little strength
And little wisdom, too !

It needs a loving spirit
Much more than strength, to prove
How many things a child can do
For others, by its love.

April 30.

Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—2 PET. iii. 18.

LIGHT gives life, and growth, and beauty. See the little leaves peeping up into the light above the ground,—alive, and growing, and beautiful! See the graceful vines climbing up towards the sun, and putting forth tiny tendrils and bright blossoms! Jesus calls Himself the “Light of the world,” and says, “He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” How can we follow Jesus?—The way is very plain. Kneel before Him, every day, and say from your very heart, “Dear Jesus, take my heart and make it pure from sin, and help me to do only what will please Thee.” Keep on praying this little prayer, and keep on trying to do right, and He will make you grow nearer to Him, as the little vine grows nearer to the sun; and He will make your life beautiful with gentle, loving deeds, as He makes the vine beautiful with blossoms.

MORNING-GLORY.

“Hark!” says Morning-Glory,
“Hear what all my bells are chiming,—
Blue, and pink,—so softly rhyming:—
‘Keep on climbing! Keep on climbing!’
This is all their story.”

May 1.

All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.—JOHN i. 3.

“God’s been here to-day, mamma! He’s been down our lane,” said a dear little boy we call Bert.

"What makes you think so?" asked his mamma. "Because yesterday there wasn't a single pussy-willow, and now there are lots of them. Nobody could do that so quick, but God," said Bert. . . . "No," said mamma; "all the great men in the world could not make a branch of pussy willow, in a lifetime, nor make it if they should live a hundred years, any more than they could make a pussy-cat. And yet the great God in Heaven brings the dead branch to life by His rain and sunshine. In a few hours, while we are sleeping, He brings out these lovely, fuzzy little buds, and covers the ground with violets and May-flowers. You are right, dear little boy. God has been here, making the world beautiful with spring. He is always here, doing His mighty works, and teaching us His greatness and goodness."

My Paper.

GOD'S MIRACLE OF MAY.

There came a message to the vine,
A whisper to the tree;
The bluebird saw the secret sign,
And merrily sang he!
And, like a silver string, the brook
Trembled with music sweet,—
Enchanting notes in every nook,
For echo to repeat.

A magic touch transformed the fields,—
Greener each hour they grew,
Until they shone, like burnished shields,
All jeweled o'er with dew.
Scattered upon the forest floor,
A million bits of bloom
Breathed fragrance forth thro' morning's door,
Into the day's bright room.

Then, bud by bud, the vine confessed
The secret it had heard;
And, in the leaves, the azure-breast
Sang the delightful word:

Glad flowers upsprang amid the grass
And flung their banners gay,
And, suddenly, it came to pass,—
God's miracle of May.

FRANK DEMPSTER SHERMAN.

May 2.

Therefore we will wait upon Thee: for Thou hast made all these things.—JER. xiv. 22.

“WHEN happy thoughts come into your mind, let the thought of God come with them.” Never forget that He made the birds, and the flowers, and all the beautiful things we see, that we, His children, may be happy.

BEAUTIFUL SPRING, HASTE, OH, HASTE!

Open your doors, open your heart,
Haste, oh, haste!
Now Spring comes tapping and rapping so clear.
Oh, list, 'tis a joyful sound to hear!
Tapping and rapping, as he knows how
With the buds and blossoms on every bough.
Haste, oh, haste!

Open your doors, open your hearts,
Haste, oh, haste!
For he comes with a rosy face of joy,—
East wind,—the riotous noisy boy,—
Blowing, till all are roused and stirred
To meet and welcome in his lord,—
Haste, oh, haste!

Open your doors, open your hearts,
Haste, oh, haste!
For the nightingale trills in her joyous flight,
A long, low song of ecstatic delight
And my heart, in echo, doth joyfully sing
Enter, oh, enter, beautiful spring!
Haste, oh, haste!

From the German of Müller.

May 3.

*For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone ;
the flowers appear on the earth ; the time of the sing-
ing of birds is come.—SONG OF SOLOMON ii. 11, 12.*

SPEAKING of flowers, Wilberforce said that they seemed to him “like the smile on the Father’s countenance.” So all the beauty of the sky and the earth is like the smile of God.

HENRY WARE, JR.

SPRING.

The alder by the river
Shakes out her powdery curls ;
The willow buds in silver
For little boys and girls.

The little birds fly over,
And O, how sweet they sing !
To tell the happy children
That once again ’tis spring.

The gay, green grass comes creeping
So soft beneath their feet ;
The frogs begin to ripple
A music clear and sweet ;

And buttercups are coming,
And scarlet columbine,
And in the sunny meadows
The dandelions shine.

And just as many daisies
As their soft hands can hold
The little ones may gather,
All fair in white and gold.

Here blows the warm red clover,
There peeps the violet blue ;
O, happy, little children !
God made them all for you !

CELIA THAXTER.

May 4.

Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.—PHIL. iv. 8.

MAKE yourselves nests of pleasant thoughts. None of us yet know what fairy palaces we may build of beautiful thoughts, . . . houses built without hands, for our souls to live in.

JOHN RUSKIN.

FAR IN THE WOODS IN MAY.

Far in the woods, the fresh, green woods in May,
Once sang a bird; but all it found to say
Was,—“Keep it! keep it!” all the merry day.

The bird? I never saw it, no, not I!
I followed, but it flitted far on high;
And “Keep it! keep it!”—echo caught the cry.

I was so glad as through the woods I went!
And now I think that “Keep it! keep it!” meant,—
“Child, keep each happy thought that Heaven has
sent.”

EDITH M. THOMAS.

May 5.

It is good that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.—LAM. iii. 26.

O IMPATIENT ones! Did the leaves say nothing to you as they murmured to-day? They were not fashioned this spring, but months ago; and the summer just begun will fashion others for another year. At the bottom of

every leaf-stem is a cradle, and in it is an infant germ ; and the winds will rock it, and the birds will sing to it, all summer long, and next season it will unfold. So God is working for you, and carrying forward to the perfect development, all the processes of your lives.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

APPLE BLOSSOMS.

O brown boughs, lovely boughs,
Which, but the other day
Pelted with sleet and scourged with snow,
Wind-tossed, and beaten to and fro,
Hung in the orchard way,
And bent and creaked in dreary row ;
Did any voice then whisper thee
The beauteous thing that was to be ?

O bare boughs, patient boughs,
Bravely ye bore, and well,
While April sobbed with dreary wail,
And May's reluctant smile was pale,
And Spring rehearsed her spell
In vain, and found its potency fail,
And bird, and bee, and flower were fain
To turn to winter's sleep again.

O brave boughs, rewarded boughs,
Ye waited not in vain !
To-day in all the orchard rows,
With flush of snow and flush of rose,
Laugh all your lengths again ;
And, borne on every breeze that blows,
Such fragrant breaths stir overhead
As only happy hearts can shed.

O sweet boughs, happy boughs,
This is your carnival ;
Fruit-time is good, but blossom-days
Are time of hope and time of praise ;
And, when the blossoms fall,
And, blown along the orchard-ways,
Are lost and trodden in at last,
The sweetest of the year is past.

So, dear boughs, helpful boughs,
Clasp tight each petal fair,
Hold it on high, till all shall see,
And sad hearts, passing heavily,
Read, traced in scented air,
The lesson, bravely learned by thee,—
That all good things, or soon, or late,
Shall come to those who dare to wait.

SUSAN COOLIDGE.

May 6.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.—PSA. XC. 12.

“I HAVE lost a day ! ” said Titus, emperor of Rome, as night drew on. He could not remember a single worthy deed by which to note the day.

One kind word, bringing cheer, one helpful deed making toil easier, one short prayer to be better and wiser, may make a day to be numbered in Heaven.

ONE AT A TIME.

One little grain in the sandy bars,
One little flower in the field of flowers,
One little star in a heaven of stars,
One little hour in a year of hours,
What if it makes, or what if it mars ?

But the bar is built of the little grains,
And the little flowers make the meadows gay,
And the little stars light the heavenly plains,
And the little hours of each little day
Give to us all that life contains.

ERNEST WHITNEY.

May 7.

Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing ? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.
—MATT. X. 29.

REMEMBER, my child, to be kind to all living things.

Wouldst thou have the redbreast sing thee his sweetest song ? feed him with crumbs in winter, and in summer he will flutter 'round thee, in the garden. Love thy pony, thy dog, thy canary, and, when thou art a man, thou wilt not be found hunting a frightened hare to death, or pouring bullets into the breasts of fluttering grouse ; for, as Samuel Coleridge says :—

“ He prayeth best who loveth best
All things, both great and small,
For the great God who loveth us,—
He made and loveth all.”

ROBERT BIRD.

THE BROWN THRUSH.

There's a merry brown thrush sitting up in the tree,
He's singing to me ! he's singing to me !
And what does he say, little girl, little boy ?
“ O, the world's running over with joy !
Don't you hear ? Don't you see ?
Hush ! Look ! In my tree
I'm as happy as happy can be ! ”

And the brown thrush keeps singing,—“ A nest, do you see ?
And five eggs hid by me in the juniper-tree ?
Don't meddle ! don't touch ! little girl, little boy,
Or the world will lose some of its joy.
Now I'm glad ! now I'm free !
And I always shall be,
If you never bring sorrow to me.”

So the merry brown thrush sings away in the tree
To you and to me,—to you and to me ;
And he sings all the day, little girl, little boy,
“ O, the world's running over with joy !
But long it won't be,
Don't you know ? don't you see ?
Unless we are good as can be.”

LUCY LARCOM.

May 8.

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.—MATT. xi. 15.

FOR one who has ears to hear, God's world has a voice, and that voice is never plainer, and sweeter, and more full of the notes of divine tenderness than in the spring-time, when the tide of life comes flooding back.

LITTLE MAY.

Have you heard the waters singing,
Little May,
Where the willows green are bending
O'er their way?
Do you know how low and sweet
O'er the pebbles at their feet,
Are the words the waves repeat,
Night and day?

Have you heard the robins singing,
Little one,
When the rosy dawn is breaking,—
When 'tis done?
Have you heard the wooing breeze,
In the blossomed orchard trees,
And the drowsy hum of bees
In the sun?

All the earth is full of music,
Little May,—
Bird, and bee, and water singing
On its way.
Let their silver voices fall,
On thy heart with happy call:—
"Praise the Lord, who loveth all,"
Night and day,
Little May.

EMILY HUNTINGTON MILLER.

May 9.

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever.—PSA. cxxxvi. 1.

THE secret of a happy life is having one's heart full of praise; and when we count our blessings every day, in a spirit of thanksgiving for them, we shall find many a reason why we should praise God.

A WALK IN SPRING.

I'm very glad the spring is come,—the sun shines out so bright;
The little birds upon the trees are singing with delight;
The young grass looks so fresh and green, the lambs do sport and play,
And I can skip and run about as merrily as they.

I like to see the daisy and the buttercups once more,
The primrose and the cowslip too, and every pretty flower;
I like to see the butterfly extend her painted wing,
And all things seem, just like myself, so pleased to see the spring.

The fishes in the little brook are jumping up so high,—
The lark is singing sweetly, as she mounts unto the sky;
The rooks are building up their nests upon the great oak-tree,
And everything's as busy and as happy as can be.

There's not a cloud upon the sky, there's nothing dark or sad;
I jump, and scarce know what to do, I feel so very glad;
God must be very good indeed, who made each pretty thing,—
I'm sure we ought to love Him much for bringing back the spring.

M. A. STODDART.

May 10.

*Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness,
and for His wonderful works to the children of men !*
—Psa. cvii. 15.

ALL the pleasant things of this world,—the flowers, the sunshine, the moonlight,—all these were given us by some great kindness and goodness which we have never seen at all. And this Goodness and this Love are the great Power out of which all things come, which we call by the name of God. And because God is so much above us, and so good to us, we call Him by the name which is most dear to us of all earthly names,—our Father. When a father goes away from home, still his children know that he is somewhere, though they cannot see him, and they know what to do in order to please him. So it is with the great unseen Father of us all.

DEAN STANLEY.

WE THANK THEE.

For flowers that bloom about our feet,
For tender grass, so fresh and sweet,
For song of bird and hum of bee,
For all things fair we hear or see,—
Father in Heaven, we thank Thee !

For blue of stream and blue of sky,
For pleasant shade of branches high,
For fragrant air and cooling breeze,
For beauty of the blooming trees,—
Father in Heaven, we thank Thee !

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

May 11.

*He was in the world, and the world was made by Him,
and the world knew Him not.—JOHN i. 10.*

CAN it be that every May is such a festival among the

woods, and that this solemn old forest holds such fairy holiday every year, garlanding its bare branches, and strewing every brown nook which a sunbeam can reach, with showers of flowers, such as we strew on a bride's path? And then, who could have imagined that those grave old firs and stately birches could become the cradles of all these delicate tufted blossoms and tenderly-folded leaflets, bursting on all sides from their gummy casings? . . . It is God, touching every branch and hidden root, and waking them to beauty. It is not sunshine, merely, and soft breezes; it is our Father smiling on His works, and making the world fresh and fair for His children,—it is the healing touch and the gracious Voice we have learned to know. “We are in the world, and the world was made by Thee.”

ELIZABETH CHARLES.

From “The Schönberg Cotta Family.”

MAY.

Like drifts of tardy snow
On leafless branches caught,
The cherry-blossoms blow
That May has brought.

On banks that face the sun
Still shy in pretty doubt,
White violets have begun
To look about.

The fresh winds gayly bring
The orchard's faint perfume,
And purple lilacs swing
Their feathery bloom!

Along the meadow's edge
New grass has just been seen,
And, on the hawthorn hedge,
Rose hides the green;

Sunshine lies warm and still,
Cloud-shadows drift;
Light cups for dews to fill,
Wind-flowers lift.

O sweet, fresh world, and young !
A bluebird flashes by,
And singing joy is flung
Through all the sky !

MARGARET DELAND.

May 12.

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.—Psa. cl. 6.

WE love birds. When the first soft days of spring come in all their gentle sweetness, and woo us with their warmth, and soothe us with their smile,—then come the birds. With us, they, too, rejoice that winter's reign is ended. . . . Such music ! It seems the pure outpouring of the greatest gratitude to Him who made the morn so beautiful, so full of joy and light. It is the expression of most perfect praise, in ecstasy of song. Yes, indeed, we love birds !

SING, PRETTY BIRDS.

Sing, pretty birds, and build your nests,
The fields are green, the skies are clear :
Sing, pretty birds, and build your nests,
The world is glad to have you here.

Among the orchards and the groves,
While summer days are fair and long,
You brighten every tree and bush,
You fill the air with loving song.

At early dawn, your notes are heard
In happy greeting to the day ;
Your twilight voices softly tell
When sunshine hours have passed away.

Sing, pretty birds, and build your nests,
The fields are green, the skies are clear ;
Sing, pretty birds, and build your nests,
The world is glad to have you here.

May 13.

For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen.—ROM. xi. 36.

HE (God) made the warm sun, and the cool shade; the trees that grow upwards, and the brooks that run murmuring along. All the things that we see are His work.

ANNA LÆTITIA BARBAULD.

NATURE'S SECRET.

I know a green bank where anemones grow,
And daisies and buttercups too;
And where the sweet violets open their eyes,
To the color of heaven's own blue.

The apple-trees, pink with the blossoms of May
A fragrance distil on the air,
And breezes all gently in passing them by
Kiss softly their petals so fair.

Adown through the meadow, a river flows by,—
Like a ribbon its pathway is seen,
And close to its windings, on either green bank,
Are willows of tender-hued green.

The hills, in their new budding verdure, look down
And smile on the valleys below;
And the bobolink sings o'er his nest in the grass
Where cowslips and pimpernels grow.

O nature, whose heart-throbs in winter are stilled,
What think you of spring and its bloom?
What force has impelled you to clothe the broad earth
With beauty bright, spun from your loom?

For answer, we read from each sweet-scented flower,
And from the wild bird, as it sings,—
'Tis God in the blossoms, 'tis God in the breeze,
'Tis God in the heart of *all* things.

JOSEPHINE CANNING.

May 14.

*Better it is to be of an humble spirit, with the lowly,
than to divide the spoil with the proud.—PROV.
xvi. 19.*

EACH of us has his or her place in the world, and no one else can fill it.

THE least flower, with a brimming cup, may stand and share its dewdrop with another near.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

THE VIOLET.

Down in a green and shady bed
A modest violet grew ;
Its stalk was bent,—it hung its head
As if to hide from view.

And yet it was a lovely flower,—
Its colors bright and fair ;
It might have graced a rosy bower,
Instead of hiding there.

Yet, there, it was content to bloom
In modest tints arrayed,
And there diffused a sweet perfume
Within the silent shade.

Then let me to the valley go,
This pretty flower to see,
That I may also learn to grow
In sweet humility.

JANE TAYLOR.

May 15.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.—MATT. vi. 34.

THE One who has loved and blessed me to-day, will love and bless me to-morrow; for He changes not. So, with a song of love and trust in my heart, I will rest in sweet content.

THE WREN'S NEST.

It was a wee bit housie,
But shaped, with deftest care,
Of twisted twigs, a feather or two,
A scrap of cloth of doubtful hue,
And a bit of tangled hair.

And the merry little artist
Who twittered overhead
Viewed her work with happy pride,
Fluttering about from side to side,
Around the pretty bed,

Which held a tender promise
Of something fair to be;
And she poured a song
The whole day long,
Over the pale eggs, three.

Never a fear of the morrow
Clouded her hope so glad:
Never a doubt in the little brown breast,
As she gaily trimmed the dainty nest
With such things as she had.

Oh, happy little warbler!
In thy blithe note is blent
A song of trust, from day to day;
And I learn of thee, as I go my way,
A lesson of sweet content.

LUCY RANDOLPH FLEMING.

May 16.

I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.—PHIL. iv. 11.

IN a flowery dell, a herd-boy kept his sheep ; and, because his heart was joyous, he sang so loudly that the surrounding hills echoed back his song. One morning the king, who was out on a hunting expedition, said to him, “ Why are you so happy, dear little man ? ”

“ Why should I not be ? ” he answered, “ our king is not richer than I.”

“ Indeed ! ” said the king ; “ tell me of your great possessions.”

The lad answered : “ The sun in the bright blue sky shines as brightly upon me as upon the king. The flowers upon the mountain, and the grass in the valley grow and bloom to gladden my sight as well as his. I would not take a hundred thousand thalers for my hands : my eyes are of more value than all the precious stones in the world ; I have food and clothing too. Am I not therefore as rich as the king ? ”

“ You are right,” said the king, with a laugh ; “ but your greatest treasure is a contented heart ; keep it so, and you will always be happy.”

CONTENTMENT.

The violets blossom, the grass is green,
The birds build homes the branches between,
The brooks babble softly, the warm winds blow ;
The spring is so sweet ! O, why does it go ?

The wild rose is here, the strawberries blush,
The skies are tinged with a rosy flush,
The sails glide lazily down the bay,—
Beautiful summer, stay, oh, stay !

A golden haze in the balmy air,
A peaceful lake under skies so fair,—
Leaves of crimson and russet, and brown,—
The year is still sweet, tho' 'tis older grown.

Ivory whiteness o'er valley and hill,
Moonlight nights so peaceful and still,
Golden stars throbbing in skies so blue,—
Earth in winter is glorious too.

God is good, and the earth is fair,
Beauty and gladness are everywhere ;
Whether 'tis winter, or summer, or spring,
Rejoice, my heart, rejoice and sing !

M. B.

May 17.

As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him.—Psa. ciii. 11.

As flowers never put on their best clothes for Sunday, but wear their spotless raiment, and exhale their odor every day, so let your Christian life, free from stain, *ever* give forth the fragrance of the love of God.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

SUNNY-DAY SERMONS.

The sun's text is: "Begin the day
With shining purpose, anyway ;"
The rain's: "Let tears fall only where
They'll make the world more bright and fair ;"
The wind says: "Let your voice be sweet,
And only pleasant things repeat ;"
The flowers whisper, hid apart:
"Show to the world a perfect heart,"
The while the sky from up above
Shines down the sermon: "Heaven is love."

May 18.

Keep thyself pure.—I Tim. v. 22.

ONE day a drop of water lay in a pool on the city

street. It was stained and soiled ; but, looking up, it saw the blue sky, and the pure heavens, and the white sunbeams dancing everywhere, and began to long for purity, and for a nobler, worthier life. It looked up into the sky, and its longing became an earnest prayer to be made clean and beautiful. And its prayer was heard. Presently the little soiled drop was lifted up, out of the gutter, into the air, higher and higher. Then the breeze caught it, and it was wafted away,—away,—and by and by it rested in the bosom of a rose,—a drop of pure crystal dew. So God answers *our* prayers for holiness.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness : for they shall be filled.”

JAMES R. MILLER.

HYMN.

I'm but a little child,
And yet I grieve Thee, Lord ;
Often I go from Thee astray,—
Often forget Thy Word.

Thou biddest me be pure,
Gentle, and meek, and mild ;
And yet full many a word I speak
Ill fitting God's dear child.

From morning prayer till even,
I oft forget Thy name,
Which angels worship day and night,—
And yet I feel no shame.

Jesus, who once like me
Didst walk this earth, a child,
May Thy good Spirit make me pure,
Howe'er by sin defiled.

M. H. S.

May 19.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.—JAS. i. 17.

‘THIS is my text to think about to-day. It means,

mamma says, that *everything* good comes from God. He has given me my mamma and papa, and my baby-brother,—and all the sweet air for us to breathe, and the flowers and the birds to make us happy, and the little singing brook in the garden, and the bright clouds at sunset, and the stars,—oh, I cannot begin to tell all the good gifts to me! He must have given all these good things to others, too. Then to the bear, who lives in cold countries, He has given thick, warm fur ; and, to the hens, soft feathers where they can cuddle the little chickens. He has taught the birds to fly, and to sing, that they may show how happy they are. If we only stop to think about all this, we shall see how very kind God is to all.

THE SONG OF JOY.

When the Giver made the wings,
He called the little birds to come ;
He put on them the glorious things,—
But their great delight was dumb.

“Who,” He said, “shall have the song?”
Quick their hearts began to beat ;
Wings began to stir and long,
Joy ran wild in head and feet.

“Oh, what bliss, what bliss to fly ! ”
Sang the bird within the breast.
Ah, that joy must speak or die,
So He smiled, and gave the rest.

CARL SPENCER.

May 20.

Casting all your care upon Him ; for He careth for you.—1 PET. v. 7.

IT is related of Mungo Park, the famous African traveler, that one day, when he was traveling alone, he was almost worn out, and, in his exhaustion, he lay down,

almost in despair. The sun was shining with overpowering heat, and the dry sand of the desert seemed hot enough to scorch his flesh. When he was almost ready to give up in despair, he noticed near him a little moss plant growing green and fresh even in the desert. The sight of it brought to his mind the recollection that God was everywhere. This little plant taught him that God cared for it, even in the desert, and the thought gave fresh courage to the lonely traveler. He was moved to tears with the sense of God's presence, and, rising to his feet with new courage, he pressed on, and was delivered out of that which seemed to be certain death.

HE CARETH FOR US.

I heard the robin singing
 His happy morning song,—
I saw his help-meet bringing
 Their breakfast to the young :
And to me came a whisper
 In winds that softly fanned the tree,
“ If God for these so careth,
 Will He not care for thee ? ”

I saw the roses growing
 In beauty, day by day,
No queen, in all her glory
 So lovely in array ;
And on their leaves were written
 Sweet words of love and trust for me
“ If God so clothed the roses
 Will He not care for thee ? ”

I thank Thee, O my Father,
 That, 'mid life's toil and dust
The birds and flowers can bring me
 Such heavenly hope and trust ;
Quickened by faith they whisper
 The Master's word in peace to me :—
“ If God for these so careth,
 Will He not care for thee ? ”

WILLIAM NEWELL.

May 21.

No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us.—I JOHN iv. 12.

THE sun does not shine for a few trees and flowers, but for the wide world's joy. The lonely pine on the mountain-top waves its sombre boughs and cries, "Thou art my sun!" And the little meadow-violet lifts its cup of blue, and whispers with its perfumed breath, "Thou art my sun!" And the grain in a thousand fields rustles in the wind, and makes answer, "Thou art my sun!"

So God sits effulgent in Heaven, not for a favored few, but for the universe of life; and there is no creature so poor or so low that he may not look up with child-like confidence, and say, "My Father, Thou art mine!"

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

A CHILD'S THOUGHT OF GOD.

They say that God lives very high,—

But if you look above the pines

You cannot see our God; and why?

And if you dig down in the mines,

You never see Him in the gold;

Though from Him all that glory shines.

God is so good, He wears a fold

Of Heaven and earth across His face—

Like secrets kept, for love, untold.

But still I feel that His embrace

Slides down by thrills, thro' all things made,
Thro' sight and sound of every place;

As if my tender mother laid

On my shut lids her tender pressure,
Half waking me at night, and said,

"Who kissed you in the dark, dear guesser?"

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

May 22.

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice : and let men say among the nations, The Lord reigneth.—
I CHRON. xvi. 31.

WHAT inexpressible joy for me to look up through the apple-blossoms and the fluttering leaves, and to see God's love there ; to listen to the thrush that has built his nest among them, and to feel God's love, who cares for the birds, in every note that swells his little throat ; to look beyond to the bright blue depths of the sky, and feel they are a canopy of blessing,—the roof of the house of my Father ; that if clouds pass over it, it is the unchangeable light they veil : that, even when the day itself passes, I shall see that the night itself only unveils new worlds of light ; and to know that if I could unwrap fold after fold of God's universe, I should only unfold more and more blessing, and see deeper and deeper into the love which is at the heart of all.

ELIZABETH CHARLES.

GOD'S HOUSE.

This is God's house ; the blue sky is the ceiling,
This wood,—the soft, green carpet for His feet,—
Those hills, His stairs down which the brook comes stealing
With baby laughter, making earth more sweet.

And here His friends come,—clouds and soft winds sighing,
And little birds whose throats pour forth their love ;
And spring and summer, and the white snow lying
Pencilled with shadows of bare boughs above.

And here come sunbeams thro' the green leaves straying,
And shadows from the storm-clouds overdrawn,
And warm, hushed nights, when Mother Earth is praying
So late that her moon-candle burns till dawn.

FREDERICK GEORGE SCOTT.

May 23.

Unto Thee, O God, do we give thanks,—unto Thee do we give thanks: for that Thy name is near Thy wondrous works declare.—PSA. lxxv. 1.

THERE are no such frescoes in art, as God's Hand paints in the heavens. There are no such relations of God as come to us through nature. In the budding, blossoming days of spring, in the balmy days of summer, in the fruitful days of autumn, in the days of winter, in every day of the year, there is something which is a separate leaf to me in God's *outside* Bible, now that I have learned to read it.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

GOD IS THERE.

When o'er earth is breaking
Rosy light and fair,
Morn afar is telling
Sweetly,—“God is there! ”

When the spring is wreathing
Flowers, rich and rare,
On each leaf is written,—
“Nature's God is there! ”

Songs and Games.

May 24.

Give, and it shall be given unto you.—LUKE vi. 38.

THE only joys which live and grow are those we share with others.

THE REASON WHY.

‘Oh, happy birds among the boughs,
And silver tinkling brook below,
Why are you glad,
Though skies look sad? ’

“Ah, would you, would you know ?”
A pleasant voice to me replied ;
“For some one else we sing,
And that is why the woodlands wide
With rapture 'round us ring.”

“Oh, daisies, crowding all the fields,
And twinkling grass, and buds that grow,
Each glance you greet
With smiles so sweet !”
“And why ? ah, would you know ?”
Their beauty to my heart replied,—
“For some one else we live,
And nothing in this world so wide
Is sweeter than to give !”

GEORGE COOPER.

—
May 25.

He that sheweth mercy (let him do it) with cheerfulness.
—ROM. xii. 8.

ART little ? do thy little well, and for thy comfort know.
Great men can do their greatest work no better than just so.
GOETHE.

THE LITTLE SUNBEAM.

A little sunbeam in the sky
Said to itself one day :—
“I’m very small, but why should I
Do nothing else but play ?
I’ll go down to the earth and see
If there is any use for me.”

The violet-beds were wet with dew,
Which filled each heavy cup ;
The little sunbeam darted through
And raised their blue heads up ;
They smiled to see it, and they lent
The morning’s breeze their sweetest scent.

A mother, 'neath a shady tree,
Had left her babe asleep ;
It woke and cried, but, when it spied
The little sunbeam peep
So slyly in, with glance so bright,
It laughed and chuckled with delight.

On, on it went, it might not stay :
Now, through a window small,
It poured its glad but tiny ray,
And danced upon the wall ;
A pale young face looked up to meet
The sunbeam she had watched to greet.

* * * *

And so it traveled to and fro,
And frisked and danced about ;
And not a door was shut, I know,
To keep the sunbeam out ;
But ever, as it touched the earth,
It woke up happiness and mirth.

I may not tell the history
Of all that it could do,
But I tell you this, that you may try
To be a sunbeam too ;
By little smiles to soothe and cheer,
And make your presence ever dear.

And loving words, like sunbeams, will
Dry up a fallen tear,
And loving deeds will often help
A broken heart to cheer ;
So loving, and so living, you
Will be a little sunbeam too.

May 26.

O satisfy us early with Thy mercy ; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.—Psa. xc. 14.

DIFFICULTIES dissolve before a cheerful spirit, as snow-drifts before the sun.

MY ROBIN.

When I was a child, beside our door,
In a green and spreading sycamore,
There sung each morning, with note as clear
As a crystal brook, and full of cheer,
A robin.

I watched his plumage, in childish glee,
And fancied he sung his song for me ;
And the memory lingers in heart and brain,
Making me often a child again,—
My robin.

I look for his coming in early spring
When the crocus opens, and maples bring
Their crimson tassels to kiss the breeze,
And the sunshine dallies with new-leaved trees,
My robin.

I hear him sing as the sun goes down,
And the stars come out o'er the silent town,
But there's never a harsh or mournful note,
That wells afresh from the warbler's throat,
My robin.

And I learn a lesson of hope and cheer,
That carries me on from year to year :
To sing in the shadow as in the sun,
Doing my part, till the work is done.
My robin.

SARAH K. BOLTON.

May 27.

Behold, a sower went forth to sow.—MATT. xiii. 3.

LET us sow seeds every day, but be sure they are always *good* seeds ; seeds, in the spring-time, which shall bring forth beautiful trees to make homes for the birds, and shade for the weary, and seeds of lovely flowers to gladden all who see them. Let us sow seeds of kindness, all the year 'round, to cheer the hearts of those who hear

the kind words, or see the kind acts. This is the bit of work God gives each of us to do. He can bless the seeds of love and beauty, which we scatter, making them grow to make the world happier and more beautiful.

THE SOWER.

I'm a little sower,
Always sowing seed
In the hearts of others,—
So I must take heed,—
Take heed what I sow.

If the seed be bad seed,
Naughty things will grow
In the hearts of others,—
So I must take heed,—
Take heed what I sow.

If the seed be good seed,
Lovely things will grow
In the hearts of others,—
So I must take heed,—
Take heed what I sow.

May 28.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.—LUKE ii. 52.

UP among the green hills of Galilee was the little village of Nazareth. Here the boyhood of Jesus was passed. I like to think of Him playing in the fields and *growing* strong in body, while He learned how the lilies grow, and how the birds of the air live. Then I think of Him in the synagogue, learning the lessons which the rabbi or teacher set him and so *growing* in wisdom. But, best of all, I like to think that every day He wished to do the things that would please God, and so was *growing* in the grace of God.

LUCY WHEELOCK.

TO A LITTLE MAID.

How should little maidens grow,
When they're ten, or over ?
In the sunshine and the air,
Wholesome, simple, fresh and fair,
As the bonny daisies blow,
And the happy clover.

How should little lassies speak
When they're ten, or over ?
As the birds do, and the bees,
Singing through the flowers and trees,
Till each mortal fain would seek
The merry-hearted rover.

How about her eyes and ears
At this stage of growing ?
Like the clear unclouded skies
Not too eager, nor too wise,
So that all she sees and hears
May be worth the knowing.

And the little maiden's heart ?
Ah, for that we're praying, —
That it strong and pure may grow ;
God, who loveth children so,
Keep her from all guile apart,
Through life's mazes straying.

May 29.

To do good and to communicate, forget not ; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.—HEB. xiii. 16.

REMEMBER that if the opportunities for *great* deeds should never come, the opportunity for *good* deeds is renewed for you, day by day. The thing for us to long for is the goodness, not the glory.

FREDERIC W. FARRAR.

ONLY.

It was only a little blossom, —
Just the merest bit of bloom, —
But it brought a glimpse of summer,
To the little darkened room.

It was only a glad “Good-morning!”
As she passed along the way, —
But it spread the morning’s glory
Over the livelong day.

Only a song,—but the music,
Tho’ simple, pure and sweet,
Brought back to better pathways
The reckless, roving feet.

Only! In our blind wisdom
How dare we say it at all?
Since the ages alone can tell us
Which is the great or small.

CARLOTTA PERRY.

May 30.

These wait all upon Thee; that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season.—Psa. civ. 27.

THE little birds waken early, for they go early to sleep. Long before the dawn of day there are faint twitterings, then a few sweet notes answered by other sweet notes,—good-mornings to one another,—and soon a full, joyous, chorus of song! Who tells the birds that morning is surely coming? Who but God, who cares for every living thing?

THE LESSON OF TRUST.

The wind of the morning was in the sky,
Calling and calling, now low, now high,—
“Awake and awake, ye bonny wee birds
And wake and awake, ye flocks and ye herds!”

It called and it called, long ever a note
Was answered back by a feathered throat ;
And the flocks and the herds were as silent and still,
Under the brow of the sheltering hill.

But suddenly through the darkness there,
Over the hill and everywhere, —
By field and wood, and rock and river,
A shadowy presence seemed to quiver.

And straightway out of a million throats
Lifted a million musical notes,
And all in a moment, as if at a word,
The sleeping cattle awoke and stirred ;

And rock, and river, and plain, and hill
With jubilant life began to thrill,
While yet no human eye could mark
The spirit of dawn within the dark.

NORA PERRY.

May 31.

Blessed are the merciful : for they shall obtain mercy.
—MATT. v. 7.

A PLEASANT story is told of Gen. Robert Lee, during the Civil War. One day, when he was inspecting a battery, and his soldiers had gathered into a group to welcome him, this action drew upon them the hot fire of Union guns. The general noticed it, and he faced about and advised the men to go under shelter. But he did not do this himself. He walked coolly onwards, at the risk of his life, and picked up and replaced an unfledged sparrow, which had fallen from its nest in a tree close by the battery.

Our Dumb Animals.

A FINISHED NEST.

Hidden by the shady tangle
They have toiled with beak and breast,
Till green leaf and rosy spangle
Smile around a finished nest.

Who, that beauteous nest would rifle
With a rude and unjust hand?
Who, that music rich would stifle
Ere it floated o'er the land?

Who can view such artful labor
Rent and spoiled, without a sigh?
Who would hurt his tuneful neighbor
Of the loving heart and eye?
Spare the feathered woodland rover;
Let him work, and love, and sing!
Soon his little day is over,
And he folds his weary wing.

June 1.

Happy is the man that feareth alway; but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.—PROV. xxviii. 14.

A FELLOW-TRAVELER of Abraham Lincoln related this incident:—"We had passed through a thicket of wild plum and crab-apple trees, and stopped to water our horses. One of the party came up alone. 'Where is Lincoln?' we enquired. 'Oh,' he replied, 'when I saw him last, he had caught two young birds which the wind had blown out of their nest, and he was hunting for the nest, that he might put them back in it.' In a short time Lincoln came up, having found the nest, and restored the birds. The party laughed at him, but he said,—'I could not have slept, if I had not restored those little birds to their mother.' "

POOR ROBIN.

"Oh, what is the matter with Robin,
What makes her cry 'round here all day?
I think she must be in great trouble,"
Said Swallow to little Blue Jay.

"I know why the Robin is crying,"
Said Wren, with a sob in her breast;
"A naughty, bold robber has stolen
Three little blue eggs from her nest.

“ He carried them home in his pocket ;
I saw him, from up in the tree ;
Ah me ! how my little heart fluttered,
For fear he would come and rob me.”

“ Oh ! what little boy was so wicked ? ”
Said Swallow, beginning to cry ;
“ I wouldn’t be guilty of robbing
A dear little bird’s nest,—not I ! ”

“ Nor I ! ” said the birds, in a chorus ;
“ A cruel and mischievous boy !
I pity his father and mother,
He surely can’t give them much joy.

“ I guess he forgot what a pleasure
The dear little robins all bring
In early spring-time, and in summer,
By the beautiful songs that they sing.

“ I guess he forgot what the rule is,
To do as you would be done by ;
I guess he forgot that from Heaven,
There looks down an all-seeing Eye.”

June 2.

Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.—MATT. x. 31.

THE FIRST STEPS OF JESUS.

THE Holy family dwelt at Nazareth, outside the city, in a cottage, to which none came but those who sought food and shelter. And it was there, under the cool shadow of a fig-tree two centuries old, that Jesus grew in peace and greatness at His mother’s knee. But to learn to walk is difficult, therefore the Virgin went to pick the most beautiful rose in her garden, and, returning, held it out to Him, saying, “ My Son, come and take it from my hand.” But the Baby dared not advance over the ground ; He only stretched out His little arms towards

His adorable mother. Whereupon a young bird,—a white dove, in trying to fly from its nest, fell at the feet of the Virgin. Then, swaying to and fro, Jesus advanced, but without hesitating, and, lifting the trembling bird, in order to calm its fear, pressed it tenderly against His divine heart, the while He caressed it with His lips softly. And it was thus that the Saviour, leaving the flower that does not last, in order to heal a wound, to comfort a sorrow,—took His first step upon earth.

WILLIAM THEODORE PETERS.
From a French legend.

LOVE TO JESUS.

When Jesus Christ was here below,
And spread His works of love abroad,
If I had lived as long ago,
I think I should have loved the Lord.

Jesus, who was so very kind,
Who came to pardon sinful men,
Who healed the sick, and cured the blind,—
O, must I not have loved Him then ?

But where is Jesus ? is He dead ?
O no ! He lives in Heaven above ;
" And blest are they," the Saviour said,
" Who, though they have not seen Me, love."
JANE TAYLOR.

June 3.

Whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister.—MARK x. 43.

JESUS tells us how to be great. He says if any one wants to be so, he must be a minister. This does not mean here, a preacher, but one who ministers, or serves others. One who ministers is always watching for a chance to help somebody,—always ready to run upon errands,—always ready to "lend a hand." Of course, young feet and small hands can only do little things, but

small things count. This seems a strange way to be great, and often it may be tiresome and hard. Then, too, nobody may notice and praise the little servant who is willing to serve cheerfully. But this way of being great must be the right way, for Jesus says so. He says He became a servant, Himself, yet "His name is above every name." He does not promise that all who serve others shall be great *in this world*, but they are to be great in the kingdom of Heaven, and that will last forever. He notices the small, sweet services, and remembers every one.

NOT IN VAIN.

If I can stop one heart from breaking,
I shall not live in vain :
If I can ease one life the aching,
Or cool one pain,
Or help one fainting robin
Unto his nest again,
I shall not live in vain.

EMILY DICKINSON.

June 4.

Be ye thankful.—COL. iii. 15.

As flowers carry dewdrops, trembling on the edges of the petals, and ready to fall at the first waft of wind or brush of bird, so the heart should carry its beaded words of thanksgiving; and, at the first breath of heavenly favor, let down the shower, perfumed with the heart's gratitude.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

THANKFULNESS.

Only a little bird am I,
A song is all I bring
To greet the early morning sky,
And this is why I sing :

My nest is in the leafy tree,
The loving Father cares for me ;
So let me thank Him while I live,
Though I have but a song to give !

Only a simple flower am I,
Yet with a smile, so glad,
I look up to the shining sky ;
My life is never sad ;
The Father, on His earth below
Gave me a place to bloom and grow ;
Shall I not thank Him while I live,
Though I have but a smile to give ?

Only a meadow-brook am I,
And yet I murmur low
My thanks to yonder quiet sky,
As, winding on, I flow ;
For, when the day has gone to rest,
God's stars are gleaming on my breast ;
And I shall thank Him while I live,
Though but a whisper I can give !

Only a little child am I,—
Shall brook and flower and bird
Thank the dear Father in the sky,
And *my* lips breathe no word ?
He gave me home, and loved ones dear ;
His gentle hand still guides me here ;
Oh, let me thank Him while I live
With all my grateful heart can give !

GEORGE COOPER.

June 5.

Consider the lilies how they grow ; they toil not, they spin not ; and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.—LUKE xii. 27.

THE lilies live to scatter their odors, to flash their beauty on the sunny air, that our common paths may be gay and glad as we pass along on our Master's work.

They live to give themselves,—their fragrance, their loveliness,—it is all their Lord's and ours. . . . “Consider the lilies,” and rest in the tender care which has clothed the bare earth with beauty, that everywhere, as we go about our daily tasks, we may have around us the greetings and the promises of a Father's tender love.

JAMES BALDWIN BROWN.

THE FIELD-LILY.

La Flor del Salvador.

The Daffodil sang :—“ Darling of the sun
Am I, am I, that wear
His color everywhere.”

The Violet pleaded soft, in under-tone :—
“ Am I less perfect made?
Or, hidden in the shade
So close and deep that heaven may not see
Its own fair hue in me ? ”

The Rose stood up, full blown
Right royal as a queen upon her throne :—
“ Nay, but I reign alone,”
She said, “ with all hearts for my very own.”

One whispered, with faint flush, not far away :—
“ I am the eye of day,
And all men love me ; ” and, with drowsy sighs,
A Lotus, from the still pond where she lay,
Breathed :—“ I am precious balm for weary eyes.”

Only the fair Field-Lily, slim and tall,
Spake not at all,—
Spake not and did not stir,
Lapsed in some far and tender memory.
Softly I questioned her :
“ And what of thee ? ”
And winds were lulled about the bended head,
And the warm sunlight swathed her as in flame,
While the awed answer came :—
“ Hath HE not said ? ”

June 6.

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.—I JOHN iv. 9.

PUT together all the tenderest love you know of, the deepest you have ever felt, and the strongest that has ever been poured out upon you, and heap upon it all the love of all the loving human hearts in the world, and then multiply it by infinity, and you will begin, perhaps, to have some faint glimpse of what the love of God is.

H. W. S.

TWO GARDENS.

My garden grows beside a wall,
With lilies and violets so small,
And hollyhocks and sunflowers tall,
And I love them, I love them all.

My bright sweet-peas, so dear to me,
And my daffodils, are fair to see ;
And pansies I will give to thee ;
But I love them, I love them all.

My roses wave and scent the air ;
The scarlet poppies I love to wear ;
It seems as if for me they care,
Because I love them, I love them all.

Flowers are *we* in a garden fair,—
Flowers in God's own garden rare ;
Woven into a garland there,—
And *He* loves us,—He loves us all.

MOLLIE W. ANDERSON.

June 7.

All things are yours.—I COR. iii. 21.

To take blessings open-handed, with glad and thank-

ful heart, and to get from them all the joy with which God has charged them, is the beginning of praise. God would have you remember, in bidding you praise, that that which you enjoy, is His good gift to you.

JAMES BALDWIN BROWN.

GOD MADE THEM FOR ME.

Little barefooted Anna was trudging along

Thro' the grass-bordered footpath, one fine summer day,
And, while the brook murmured, she too sang a song,
As she happily gathered the flowers by the way.

Lady-slippers and daisies, and violets blue,

With lots of wild roses, as sweet as could be ;
She said to herself, " I am sure it is true
These flowers are all mine, and God made them for me ;

" Because, when I view them, they seem thus to say,—

' Fear not, little Anna, though poor you may be ;
God made and protects *us* by night and by day,—
And are not *you* worth very much more than we ? '

" And now, in my rambles, I think of His word,

Whenever these dear little treasures I see ;
They teach me so much of His love and His care,
I cannot but feel that God made them for me.

" They teach me while helping poor mother each day,

And she, too, has learned their sweet lessons to see ;
No playthings have I but these flowerets gay,

Yet they make me most glad,—for God made them for
me."

MARY P. HALE.

June 8.

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow ; they toil not, neither do they spin : and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.—MATT. vi. 28, 29.

WHY has God made us to enjoy beauty and music ?

or why has He made the flowers, but out of love like that of a mother? Why, but to make us happy, to gladden our hearts with His beautiful works,—to put some proof of His love into every path our feet may tread?

FRANCES POWER COBBÉ.

THE USE OF FLOWERS.

God might have made the earth bring forth
Enough for great and small,—
The oak-tree and the cedar-tree,
Without a flower at all.

He might have made enough,—enough
For every want of ours ;
For luxury, medicine and toil,
And yet have made no flowers.

The clouds might give abundant rain,
The nightly dews might fall ;
And herb that keepeth life in man,
Might have drunk in them all.

Then wherefore, wherefore were they made,
All dyed with rainbow light,—
All fashioned with supremest grace,
Upspringing day and night?

Springing in valleys green and low,
And on the mountains high,
And in the silent wilderness,
Where no man passes by ?

Our outward life requires them not,—
Then wherefore had they birth ?
To minister delight to man,—
To beautify the earth ;

To comfort man, to whisper hope
Whene'er his faith is dim ;
For whoso careth for the flowers,
Will much more care for him !

MARY HOWITT.

June 9.

Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
—EPH. v. 20.

GOD will not let us be without pleasures of our own. The fields are full of such: flowers, verdure, beautiful plants at every step; birds everywhere; and then an air all perfumed.

EUGÉNIE DE GUÉRIN.

CHILDREN, THANK GOD.

Children, thank God for these great trees,
That fan the land with every breeze;
Whose drooping branches form cool bowers
Where you can spend the summer hours,—
For these, thank God.

For fragrant sweets of blossoms bright,
Whose beauty gives you such delight;
For the soft grass beneath your feet,
For new-mown hay, and clover sweet,—
For all, thank God.

The very cows, that lie and doze
Beneath the trees in glad repose;
The birds, that in their branches sing,
And make the air with music ring,
All these thank God.

Oh, thank God for the radiant sky,
Whose varying beauty charms the eye,—
Now gray and dark, now blue and bright,
Unfailing source of pure delight,—
For this, thank God.

He gives the life to everything,—
To beasts that roar and birds that sing;
But thought and speech He gave to men,
While beasts are dumb. O children, then,
For this, thank God!

Rhyming Story-book.

June 10.

I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord.—
Psa. xxvii. 6.

Unto Thee will I pray.—Psa. v. 2.

HAST thou not seen how all in the heavens and in the earth uttereth the praise of God,—the very birds, as they spread their wings? Every creature knoweth its prayer and its praise.

KORAN.

PRAY, LOVE, WORK AND SING.

“ Dear little singing-bird out in the tree,
Singing so lightly, and seeming so free,
What is the lesson you’re teaching to me ? ”

“ Trust and sing, trust and sing ;
Keep all day upon the wing ;
And when night shadows gather, just sing,
Trust and sing.”

“ Dear little honey-bee, searching for sweet,
Loading with pollen your deft little feet,
Have you some lessons for troubled souls meet ? ”

“ Trust and try, trust and try ;
’Tis the drones that die ;
So, morning and evening, just try ;
Trust and try.”

“ Dear little lily-bell, spotless and white,
Rooted in earth, yet drinking heaven’s light,
How keep my heart like you, pure and bright ? ”.

“ Trust and love, trust and love ;
Keep your eyes fixed above,
And thro’ shower and sunshine, still love,
Trust and love.”

“ Dear, meek forget-me-not, tender and true,
Love in thy beaming eye ; hope in thy hue,
What is the lesson to mortals from you ? ”

“ Trust and pray, trust and pray,
From thyself look away ;
And tho’ tempests may threaten, still pray ;
Trust and pray.”

“ Praying and loving, and working, and singing,
How Heaven’s chimes thro’ the earth are kept ringing ;
By flowers and by song-bird, and dear busy bee !
O heart that Christ died for ! why not, then, by thee ? ”

June 11.

In the morning sow thy seed and in the evening withhold not thine hand ; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.—ECCL. xi. 6.

GIVE what you have. To some one, it may be better than you dare to think.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

I AM only one ; but still I am one. I cannot do everything ; but still I can do something ; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.

EDWARD EVERETT HALE.

HOW IT CAME.

A tiny shoot peeped out of the ground
And opened wide, as it gazed around,

Stretching its dainty leaflets bright
Up,—up,—up,—to the sweet sunlight ;

Reaching sideways,—that way,—this,
To catch the earliest zephyr’s kiss ;

Climbing higher, in balmy air
To meet the raindrops glistening there ;

Spreading its wavy branches wide,
Till song-birds came, their nests to hide,

And children gathered, in joyous glee
In the pleasant shade of the old oak-tree,

All because of a hand,—they say,—
That planted a seed, one summer day.

SYDNEY DAYRE.

June 12.

Be ye kind one to another.—EPH. iv. 32.

IN one of Geo. Macdonald's books, little Gerard is a beautiful invalid boy. One day as he sat in the window delighting himself with the sight of a lovely sunset, he exclaimed: "Oh, mamma, how I would like to help God paint the sky!"

"My darling," said his mother, "you *are* helping God paint the sky, for you make the sky of my life very, very bright." Then was little Gerard glad in his heart. Little children may put many a touch of rosy sunset into the sky that overhangs their homes. Every pleasant smile, every gentle word, every cheerful deed, is a stroke of the brush that adds beautiful colors to the home-skies, and so makes life every day sweeter. This is helping God paint the sky.

GENTLE WORDS.

A young rose in the summer-time
Is beautiful to me,
And glorious the many stars
That glimmer on the sea ;
But gentle words and loving hearts
And hands to clasp my own,
Are better than the brightest flowers
Or stars that ever shone.

The sun may warm the grass to life,
The dew the drooping flower,
And eyes grow bright that watch the light
Of autumn's opening hour ;
But words that breathe of tenderness,
And hearts we know are true,
Are warmer than the summer-time,
And brighter than the dew.

It is not much the world can give,
With all its subtle art,
And gold and gems are not the things
To satisfy the heart;
But O, if those who cluster 'round
The altar and the hearth,
Have gentle words and loving smiles,
How beautiful is earth !

C. D. STUART.

June 13.

Glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's.—1 COR. vi. 20.

ONE of the great English poets has written in verse the story of a little Italian silk-spinner, who had only one holiday in all the long year. But her heart was glad and full of song, because she knew that she could please God just as well as the rich and great. So when she went out to enjoy her precious holiday, she went singing through the street. Her song ended in this way :—

“God's in His heaven,
All's well with the world.”

And the song of happy Pippa was so blessed by God, that it helped to turn several people away from evil that day. Maybe sometimes you think you are so small and weak that you can do nothing to serve God. But you can sing, can you not? God often uses a song to work great good. And haven't you good hands? Whenever you do any helpful work with them, you are serving God. In his letter to the Romans, Paul said that every one who wished to please God must be *diligent*,—that means *busy*. And haven't you a pair of feet? Can they not run on useful errands? And you have bright eyes. Can you use those to see what you can do to help, everywhere, or to study and learn the things that will make you wise and useful?

LUCY WHEELOCK.

TWO LITTLE EYES.

Two little eyes to look to God,
Two little ears to heard His word,
Two little feet to walk in His ways,
Two hands to work for Him all my days;

One little tongue to speak His truth,
One heart to give Him now in my youth,—
Take them, dear Jesus, and let them be
Always obedient and true to Thee.

June 14.

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.—PHIL. ii. 4.

OFTEN the trifling graces that help us to brighten and sweeten life are utterly overlooked because we do not stop to think of them. There are not many who would not speak a word of good cheer, or do an act of kindness to one whom they thought stood in need of these things, but the great trouble is that we do not make it our business to *think* of the needs of others. A schoolboy, rushing along the street, saw a board in the sidewalk disarranged, and really dangerous to one passing carelessly that way, or to an aged person whose eyesight was not of the best, and whose step was none of the surest. Stopping, the lad carefully placed the board in its proper position, and then hurried on his way to the playground. When asked why he took so much trouble his answer was,—“Some one might trip on it and be hurt.”

“A little thing to do,” says some one; “anybody could do the same.” But would everybody have done so? The action may be trifling,—the great thing is to *think* of it.

C. V. WAGNER.

THE MOUNTAIN TORRENT.

Fair streamlet, running
 Where violets grow,
 Under the elm trees,
 Murmuring low ;
 Rippling gently
 Amid the grass !
 I have a fancy,
 As I pass :—

I have a fancy, as I see
 The trailing willows kissing thee ;
 As I behold the daisies pied,
 The harebells nodding at thy side,
 The sheep that feed upon thy brink,
 The birds that stoop thy wave to drink,
 The blossoms that tempt the bees to stray,
 And all the life that tracks thy way :

I deem thou flowest
 Through grassy meads,
 To show the beauty
 Of gentle deeds ;
 To show how happy
 The world might be
 If man, observant,
 Copied thee ;

To show how small a stream may pour
 Verdure and beauty on either shore ;
 To teach what humble men might do,
 If their lives were pure, and their hearts were true,
 And what a wealth they might dispense,
 In modest, calm beneficence ;
 Marking their course, as thou dost thine,
 By wayside flowers of love divine.

CHARLES MACKAY.

June 15.

Even Christ pleased not Himself.—ROM. xv. 3.

WE are not put here just to enjoy ourselves and do only what pleases us. God wants us to forget our own

selves,—that is, not to think first and foremost of ourselves, but to be busy thinking what we can do for others, to help them, or to make them happy. And the Bible tells us, you know, that "Christ pleased not Himself." He never thought what would make *Him* happiest or most comfortable, but what He could do for some one else.

KATE S. GATES.

RECEIVING AND GIVING.

"Shall I take, and take, and never give?"

The robin chirped : "No, that would be wrong ;"
So he picked at the berries and flew away,
And poured out his soul in a beautiful song.

"Shall I take, and take, and never give?"

The bee in the clover buzzed : "No, ah, no!"
So he gathered the honey, and filled his cell ;
But 'twas not for himself that he labored so.

"Shall I take, and take, and never give?"

What answer will *you* make, oh, little one?
Like the blossom, the bird and the bee, do you say :
"I will not live for myself alone"?

Let the same little hands that are ready to take
The things that our Father so freely has given,
Be ever as ready to do a kind deed,—
Till love to each other makes earth seem like heaven.

June 16.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.—ROM. xii. 15.

WE often do more good by our sympathy than by our labors.

FREDERIC W. FARRAR.

SYMPATHY.

There sat a little weary bird,
 Hemmed 'round by cruel bars;
 A lonelier soul one could not find
 Beneath the pitying stars.

But, speeding to his side, there came
 One, with so sweet a song,
 That, for a moment, slipped away
 The burden of his wrong.

“ Now, wherefore dost thou seek me here,
 Bird of the woodland free?
 I cannot tune a merry note,
 To bear thee company.

“ Hie, hie thee back to wood and glen,—
 Fly o'er the sunlit plain;
 Dip in the cool and sparkling stream
 I ne'er shall taste again.

“ Here, would the shadow of my pain
 Darken thy sunny day;
 Fettered and bound *I* must remain,—
 But *thou*,—away! away! ”

But to the sweet and pleading notes
 The wee bird made reply:—
 “ To share thy sorrow is my joy,—
 Thy bars,—my liberty! ”

FANNY BEULAH BATES.

June 17.

But we all, with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.—2 COR. iii. 18.

CONTEMPLATE the love of Christ and you will love. Stand before that mirror, reflect Christ's character, and you will be changed into the same image from tenderness

to tenderness. There is no other way. You can only look at the lovely object, and fall in love with it and grow into likeness to it. And so look at this Perfect Character, this Perfect Life. Look at the great Sacrifice, as He laid down Himself, all through life, and upon the Cross of Calvary ; and you must love Him. And, loving Him, you must become like Him.

HENRY DRUMMOND.

THE BLUEBELL.

There is a story, I have heard
A poet learned it of a bird,
And kept its music, word for word,—

A story of a dim ravine
O'er which the towering tree-tops lean,
With one blue rift of sky between,—

And there a thousand years ago,
A little flower, as white as snow,
Swayed in the silence, to and fro.

Day after day, with longing eye,
The floweret watched the narrow sky,
And fleecy clouds that floated by.

And through the darkness, night by night,
A gleaming star would climb the height,
And cheer the lonely floweret's sight.

Thus, watching the blue heavens afar,
The rising of its favorite star,
A change came to the simple flower,

And softly o'er its petals white,
There crept a blueness, like the light
Of skies, upon a summer night.

Then, in its chalice, as I'm told,
The bonny bell was found to hold
A tiny star that gleamed like gold.

And bluebells of the Scottish land
Are loved on every foreign strand,
Where stirs a Scottish heart or hand.

Now, little people, fond and true,
I read a lesson here for you,
Within the floweret's bell of blue:—

The patient child, whose watchful eye
Strives after all things pure and high,
Shall take their image, by and by.

JULIA A. EASTMAN.

June 18.

Unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings.—MAL. iv. 2.

A VISITOR, staying with the poet Tennyson, at his home on the Isle of Wight, one day ventured to ask him what he thought of the Lord Jesus Christ. The two were walking in the garden, when the question was asked. For a moment the poet made no reply, but seemed lost in reverie. Then he stopped before a beautiful flower, every petal of which seemed to be drinking in the enlivening rays of sunlight, and said, as simply as a child,—

“What the sun is to that flower, Jesus Christ is to me. He is the Sun of my soul.”

SUN OF MY SOUL.

Sun of my soul! Thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if Thou be near;
Oh, may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes.

When soft the dews of kindly sleep
My weary eyelids gently steep,
Be my last thought,—how sweet to rest
Forever on my Saviour's breast.

Abide with me from morn till eve,
For without Thee, I cannot live :
Abide with me, when night is nigh,
For without Thee, I dare not die.

Be near to bless me when I wake,
Ere through the world my way I take ;
Abide with me till in Thy love
I lose myself in Heaven above.

JOHN KEEBLE.

June 19.

There is no fear in love ; but perfect love casteth out fear.—I JOHN iv. 18.

LOVING God is but letting God love us,—giving welcome, that is, to God's love, knowing and believing the love God hath to us.

HORACE BUSHNELL.

ON THE HILLSIDE.

Searching for strawberries ready to eat,
Finding them crimson, and large, and sweet,
What do you think I saw at my feet,
Deep in the green hillside ?
Four brown sparrows,—the cunning things !
Feathered on back, and breast, and wings,
Proud with the dignity plumage brings,—
Opening their four mouths wide.

Stooping lower, to scan my prize,
Watching their motions with curious eyes,
Dropping my berries, in pleased surprise,
A sorrowful sound I heard ;
And, looking up at the plaintive call,
Over the clover, fragrant and tall,
Spied, on a tree, by the low stone wall,
The poor little mother-bird.

With pain and terror her breast was wrung,
And, as to the slender bough she clung,
She felt that the lives of her darlings hung
By a still more slender thread.

“ Ah, birdie ! ” said I, “ if you only knew
That my heart is tender, and warm, and true ! ”
But the thought that I loved her birdlings too,
Never entered her small brown head.

And so through this world of ours we go,
Bearing our burdens of needless woe,—
Many a heart beating heavy and slow
Under its load of care ;
But oh ! if we only, only knew
That God is tender, and warm, and true,
And could feel that He loves us, through and
through,
Our hearts would be light as air.

A. I. M.

June 20.

In them (the heavens) hath He set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.—Psa. xix. 4, 5.

IN some parts of the country of Norway, the sun shines all day and all night, during this lovely month of June. One can read at midnight as well as at noon, and one hardly knows when it is time to go to sleep.

A traveler in Norway writes : “ When the little insects cease their humming, and the bushes and trees are full of small birds, each standing on one leg, with its head thrust under its wing, and its round little body puffed up to nearly twice its usual size,—we are reminded that the time for rest has come.” In some other lands, the sun does not shine at all for several months. The little daughter of Lieutenant Peary,—of whom we read in the book called “ The Snow Baby,”—was born in such a land.

Do you not think that our own home-land is pleasantest, —where God draws the curtains of the night for us to sleep sweetly, and where He wakens us every morning with glad sunshine ?

SUMMER SUN.

Great is the sun, and wide he goes,
Through empty heaven, without repose ;
And, in the blue and glowing days,
More thick than rain he showers his rays.

Though closer still the blinds we pull,
To keep the shady parlor cool,
Yet he will find a chink or two
To slip his golden fingers through.

The dusty attic, spider-clad,
He, through the keyhole, maketh glad ;
And, through the broken edge of tiles,
Into the laddered hay-loft smiles.

Meantime, his golden face around
He bares to all the garden-ground,
And sheds a warm and glittering look
Among the ivy's inmost nook.

Above the hills, along the blue,
Round the bright air, with footing true,
To please the child, to paint the rose,—
The gardener of the world,—he goes.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

June 21.

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.—2 COR. i. 3, 4.

THE little offerings of the spring, the violets, the tiny leaves, the starting grass, transform the face of Nature from bleakness to beauty. And so the little kindnesses of life lend it all it has of comfort and pleasure.

THAT LITTLE.

“ What canst thou do ? ” said the oak to the flower,
 “ With thy little balmy breath
 And thy tender cheek’s soft glow
And thy life that is but for an hour,—
 What canst thou do, small flower,
 For a world that is dark with woe
And bitter with sin and death ? ”

“ Ah ! well do I know,” sighed the bending flower,
 “ That my life is humble and fleet,
 And I sweeten but little space ;
Yet many the flowerets in meadow and bower,
 And if each maketh sweet its hour,
 And its little quiet place,
Is not the whole world sweet ? ”

W. M. L. JAY.

June 22.

Do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again ; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest.—LUKE vi. 35.

Do a good deed, speak a kind word, bestow a pleasant smile, and you will receive the same in return. The happiness you bestow upon others is reflected upon yourself.

THE FOUR SUNBEAMS.

Four little sunbeams came earthward one day,
Skimming and dancing along on their way,
 Resolved that their course should be blest.
“ Let us try,” they all whispered, “ some kindness to do,
Not seek our own pleasureing all the day through,
 Then meet, in the eve, at the west.”

One sunbeam ran in at a low cottage door,
And played “ hide and seek,” with a child on the floor,
 Till baby laughed loud in his glee,
And chased with delight his strange playmate so bright,
The little hands grasping in vain for the light
 That ever before them would flee.

One crept to the couch where an invalid lay,
And brought him a dream of the sweet summer day,
 Its bird-song, and beauty, and bloom;
Till pain was forgotten, and weary unrest;
And in fancy he roamed through the scenes he loved best,
 Far away from the dim darkened room.

One stole to the heart of a flower that was sad,
And loved and caressed her until she was glad,
 And lifted her white face again;
For love brings content to the lowliest lot,
And finds something sweet in the dreariest spot,
 And lightens all labor and pain.

And one, where a little blind girl sat alone,
Not sharing the mirth of her playfellows, shone
 On hands that were folded and pale,
And kissed the poor eyes that had never known sight,
That never would gaze on the beautiful light,
 Till angels had lifted the veil.

At last, when the shadows of evening were falling,
And the sun, their great father, his children were calling,
 Four sunbeams sped into the west;
All said: "We have found that in seeking the pleasure
Of others, we fill to the full our own measure,"—
 Then softly they sank down to rest.

M. R. B. in *St. Nicholas.*

June 23.

Lead me in Thy truth and teach me; for Thou art the God of my salvation; on Thee do I wait all the day.
—Psa. xxv. 5.

THERE is a fable told about a king's garden, in which, all at once, the trees and flowers began to pine and make complaint. The oak was sad because it could not yield flowers; the rosebush was sad because it could bear no fruit; the vine was sad because it had to cling to the wall, and could cast no shadow.

"I am not of the least use in the world," said the oak. "I might as well die, since I yield no fruit," said

the rose-bush. "What good can I do in the world?" said the vine.

Then the king saw a little pansy, which, all this time held up its glad, fresh face, while all the rest were sad. And the king said: "What makes you so fresh and glad, while all the rest pine and are sad?"

"I thought," said the pansy, "that you placed me here, because you wanted me here; so I made up my mind that I would try to be the best little pansy that I could be."

Are you like the oak, the rose-bush and the vine,— doing nothing because you cannot do what others do? Then, rather be like the pansy, and do your best in that little spot where God's Hand has placed you.

BE A HELPER.

"I will be a little helper,"
Lisps the brook;
On its silvery way it goes,
Never stopping to repose,
Till it turns the busy mill,
In some nook.

"I will be a little helper,"
Smiles the flower;
By the wayside, in the field,
All its beauty is revealed
Unto sad and weary hearts,
Though skies lower.

"I will be a little helper,"
Sings the bird;
And it carols forth a song
Though the cheerless day be long,
Bringing to some helpless one
Some sweet word.

You can be a little helper,
Child, so fair;
And your kindly deeds can make
For the heavenly Father's sake,
Sunshine, love and happiness
Everywhere.

June 24.

Take heed that ye do not your alms before men to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in Heaven.—MATT. vi. 1.

AFTER you have been kind,—after Love has stolen forth into the world, and done its beautiful work,—go back into the shade again, and say nothing about it.

HENRY DRUMMOND.

THE LITTLE BIRD.

A little bird with feathers brown
Sat singing on a tree;
The song was very soft and low,
But sweet as it could be.

And all the people, passing by,
Looked up to see the bird
That made the sweetest melody
They scarce had ever heard.

But all the bright eyes looked in vain,
For birdie was so small;
And with a modest dark-brown coat,
He made no show at all.

“ Why, papa,” little Gracie said,
“ Where can this birdie be?
If I could sing a song like that,
I’d sit where folks could see! ”

“ I hope my little girl will learn
A lesson from that bird,
And try to do what good she can,
Not to be seen and heard.

“ This birdie is content to sit
Unnoticed by the way,
And sweetly sing his Maker’s praise
From dawn to close of day.

“ So live, my child, all through your life,
That, be it short or long,
Though others may forget your looks,
They’ll not forget your song.”

June 25.

Thou shalt take thy rest in safety.—JOB xi. 18.

GOD'S beneficence streams out from the morning sun,
and His love looks down upon us from the starry eyes of
midnight.

EDWIN H. CHAPIN.

THE CHILD AND THE WORLD.

I see a nest in a green elm-tree
With little brown sparrows,—one, two, three!
The elm-tree stretches its branches wide,
And the nest is soft and warm inside.
At morn, the sun, so golden bright,
Climbs up to fill the world with light ;
It opens the flowers, it wakens me,
And wakens the birdies,—one, two, three.
And, leaning out of my window high,
I look far up at the blue, blue sky,
And then, far out at the earth so green,
And think it the loveliest ever seen,—
The loveliest world that ever was seen !

But by and by, when the sun is low,
And birds and babies sleepy grow,
I peep again from my window high,
And look at the earth, and clouds, and sky ;
The night dew falls in silent showers,
To cool the hearts of thirsty flowers ;
The moon comes out,—the slender thing,
A crescent yet, but soon a ring,—
And brings with her one yellow star ;
How small it looks, away so far !
But soon, in the heaven's shining blue,
A thousand twinkle and blink at you,
Like a thousand lamps in the sky so blue.

And hush ! a light breeze stirs the tree,
And rocks the birdies,—one, two, three.
What a beautiful cradle, that soft, warm nest !
What a dear little coverlid,—mamma-bird's breast !

She's hugging them close to her, tight, so tight
That each downy head is hid from sight ;
But out from under her sheltering wings
Their bright eyes glisten,—the cunning things !
I lean far out from my window's height
And say, " Dear, lovely world, good-night ! "

" Good-night, dear, pretty baby-moon !
Your cradle you'll outgrow quite soon,
And then, perhaps, all night you'll shine,
A grown-up lady-moon, so fine
And bright that all the little stars
Will want to light their lamps from yours.
Sleep sweetly, birdies, never fear
For God is always watching near !
And you, dear friendly world above,—
The same One holds us in His love ;
Both you so great, and I so small,
Are safe,—He sees the sparrows fall,—
The dear God watcheth over all ! "

From Nature in Verse.

June 26.

His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant ; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things : enter thou into the joy of thy lord.—MATT. XXV. 21.

THERE is a duty and a glory in little faithfulnesses.
There is a peril and a shame in little sins.

FREDERIC W. FARRAR.

Perseverance is nothing but trying, trying, and trying again, until the thing meant is done.

" Attempt the end and never stop to doubt ;
There's naught so hard but work will bring it out."

IDA REED SMITH.

FIDELITY.

Nay, I must knit till my task is done,
 Though the sun is shining brightly,
 And the wind tells tales of the water-side
 Where my boat is rocking lightly.
 I am making more than a pretty gift
 For a dear friend's use and cheering,—
 I am learning a lesson of self-control,—
 The practice of *persevering*.

I must not follow the lisping call
 Of the brook that sings in the meadow,
 Nor give one glance to the fragrant turf
 Out in the oak-tree's shadow;
 For we must finish with faithful hands
 Whatever we begin;
 It is not so much the *work* we do,
 As the *patience* that we stitch in.

M. F. B.

June 27.

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.—Psa. li. 10.

DID it ever strike you that goodness is not merely *a* beautiful thing, but *the* beautiful thing? by far, the most beautiful thing in the world? and that badness is not merely an ugly thing, but *the* ugliest thing in the world? So that nothing is to be compared for value with goodness; that riches, honor, power, pleasure, learning, the whole world and all in it are not worth having, in comparison with being good: and the utterly best thing for a man is to be good, even though he were never rewarded for it; and the utterly worst thing for a man is to be bad, even though he were never punished for it; and, in a word, goodness is the only thing worth loving, and badness the only thing worth hating.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

Guard well thy thoughts,—
 Our thoughts are heard in heaven.

EDWARD YOUNG.

THE BELL OF THE ANGELS.

It is said, somewhere at twilight,
A great bell softly swings,
And a man may listen and hearken
To the wondrous music that rings.

If he put from his heart's inner chamber
All the passion, pain and strife,
Heartache and weary longing
That throb in the pulses of life ;

If he thrust from his soul all hatred,
All thoughts of wicked things,
He can hear in the holy twilight
How the bell of the angels rings.

Let us look in our hearts, and question :—
Can purer thoughts enter in
To a soul, if it be already
The dwelling of thoughts of sin ?

So, then, let us ponder a little,—
Let us look in our hearts, and see
If the twilight bell of the angels
Can ring for you and me.

June 28.

*By them (the springs) shall the fowls of the heaven
have their habitation, which sing among the branches.*
—PSA. civ. 12.

STOP and think how bleak a world this would be if it were quite empty of all our little brothers and sisters, the dumb animals. Just imagine a broad field of green grass without a living thing in sight. Picture a forest, with boughs, and branches, and leaves all a-dance in the sunshine and the wind, but with never a linnet, nor robin, nor small brown bird ; think of the hillsides without a squirrel or a rabbit to run and frisk, and peek. . . . Poor little things ! with curiosity in their

bright eyes, and fright and interest in their quick-thumping little hearts ! Let us love them, and uproot from our hearts all inclination to catch them and hold them and tease them.

THE BIRD'S NEST.

I have found a nest full of pretty eggs,
Right here in the meadow lying ;
And I may look at them all I wish,
Till the mother-bird home comes flying.

Five pretty eggs, that, by and by
Five dear little birds will be ;
With beaks, and feathers, and wings to fly,
And little brown eyes to see.

And, by and by, I will come, some day,
When the summer has older grown,
And will find them here, all hidden away,
Where I left the eggs alone.

I have heard it said, that once on a time,
(It must have been long ago),
A little boy found a nest of eggs,
Just as I found these, you know.

And that poor little boy, so little he knew,
And so naughty he was, they say,
That the pretty eggs never to birdies grew,—
For he carried them all away.

I am sure if he only had known, like me,
(For mamma has told me so),
That if he only would let them be
They would all into birdies grow.

He would never have taken the pretty nest,
And carried the eggs away,
And perhaps that five little birdies more
Would have sung in the fields to-day.

But away off there in the blue, I see
Where a fair white cloud is lying,
A little brown speck, that looks to me
Like a birdie homeward flying.

And, lest she should think I mean to keep
The treasure I took unbidden,
I will lay it back in the grasses deep,
Where I found it, safely hidden.

So, little brown birdie, do not fear,
Your nest is in tender keeping ;
And safe in their speckled houses here,
Your five little birds are sleeping.

H. J. WESCOTT.

June 29.

Praise the Lord from the earth, . . . creeping things and birds of wing.—Psa. cxlviii. 7, 10.

WOULD you like to attend a musical entertainment of high class, where all the participants are skilled musicians? You may do it free of charge. Rise with the sun, on a bright summer morning, and take a stroll on the lawn or in the garden, or, better, in the woods or the fields. As you have come out for the express purpose of hearing choice music, listen so attentively that none of the precious strains shall escape. Listen! Isn't that grand music? How sweet! how perfect! how delightful! Surely God is good for sending us such sweet-voiced winged messengers of love. Listen! They are singing praises to their Maker.

Our Dumb Animals.

MORNING SONGS.

At one in the morning,
All's silent in Birdland, all bright eyes are
curtained, and folded all wings.

At two in the morning,
Some dreaming young thing a snatch of its
daytime roundelay sings.

At three in the morning,
Early-Bird chides his slow neighbors, and
then falls asleep unaware.

At four in the morning,
All, merry and mad, pour a medley of
song on the quivering air.

EDITH M. THOMAS.

June 30.

The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.—Psa. xxxiii. 5.

REST your soul by remembering that One who feeds the birds and clothes the lilies is around you, close as the air, warm as the sunlight, with His careful cherishing ministries. . . . Learn from the birds and the lilies to rest on the loving care which enfolds you.

JAMES BALDWIN BROWN.

GOD'S FATHER-CARE.

There is no birdling in the nest the breeze rocks in the tree,
All featherless and fluttering, with eyes that cannot see,
But brooding mother-wings are there, to keep it snug and
warm,
And shelter it most lovingly from sunshine and from storm.

To every flitting butterfly, the flower-cups open wide ;
Beneath the green leaf's canopy, the meanest worm may
hide ;
Each tiny insect finds or builds some little house or cell,
And in and out goes happily, contented there to dwell.

Now, who has thought of all these things ? Who planned
and made them all ?
The One who counts the shining stars, and suffers none
to fall ;
His tender Father-love is stretched o'er everything we see,
And faileth never, night or day, to care for you and me.
After the German of Hey.—C. M. HARRIS.

July 1.

Go, work to-day in My vineyard.—MATT. xxi. 28.

Do you desire that your work should never weary you? Think that you are giving pleasure to another, and are pleasing God. . . .

MY QUESTION.

I asked a bee that was flitting by
To tell me its story, and say to me why
It seemed as happy at work as at play;
For it hummed its song the livelong day,
Yet it worked, and worked, and worked, for aye;
Now into the lily's perfumed bell,
Now into the cup of the campanel,
Now at the mouth of the trumpet-flower
That twined around our garden bower;
Anon, to the bloom of the almond-tree,
Then down to the honey-ball, close to me.
"O, tell me thy secret, blithe, happy bee,
What gives thy work such a zest for thee?"
Its answer was brief:—"I may not stay
To talk with you, for the wearing day
Admonishes that my work is not done,—
See how yon mountain is nearing the sun!
But, if you would wish to be happy and gay,
Always do your work first, and then, afterwards, play."

July 2.

Owe no man anything but to love one another.—ROM. xiii. 8.

SHALL we not choose Love, the beautiful guest, to come and live with us, and say to Envy, and Anger, and Evil-Speaking, and Impatience, that we have no room for them? For Love will not live with bad companions, and if we think unkind thoughts, and say unkind words of others, she will not stay with us. And we must be ready

to listen when she speaks to us. If we are tempted to be angry or impatient, Love will say,—“Stop! Remember! Think how patient God is with you, though you often do wrong. . . .” Reading the Bible, and praying, and going to church, and giving money to the poor, are all good, if we have love also, but they are worth little without love. “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” Paul and James, and John all wrote a great deal of this love, but perhaps John said the most beautiful thing of all, when he wrote,—“God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.”

EMILY HUNTINGTON MILLER.

A SWEET SONG OF SONGS.

The leaf-tongues of the forest, the flower-lips of the sod,
The happy birds that hymn their rapture in the ear of God;
The summer-wind that bringeth music over land and sea,
Have each a voice that singeth this sweet song of songs
to me:—

“This world is full of beauty, like other worlds above,
And, if we did our duty, it might be full of love.”

GERALD MASSEY.

July 3.

*Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.—
I THESS. V. 21.*

WHILE we instantly shut our hearts against all that is impure and unholy, all thoughts that would tarnish, or stain, or blight, we should open them just as quickly to all thoughts that are pure, and true, and honest, and just, and lovely.

JAMES R. MILLER.

THE BEE'S WISDOM.

Said a little wandering maiden
To a bee, with honey laden;—
“Bee, in *all* the flowers you work,
Yet in some doth poison lurk.”

“ That I know, my little maiden,”
Said the bee, with honey laden ;
“ But the poison I forsake,
And the honey only, take.”

“ Cunning bee, with honey laden,
That is right,” —replied the maiden ;
“ So will I, from all I meet,
Only take the good and sweet.”

July 4.

Let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good that he may have to give to him that needeth.—
EPH. iv. 28.

THERE is an old legend concerning three young women, who disputed as to who had the most beautiful hands. One dipped her hands into the pure running stream, another picked berries until her fingers were pink, a third gathered roses until her hands were made sweet by their fragrance. An aged woman, careworn and decrepit, leaning upon her staff, came, asking a gift, but all alike refused her. A fourth young woman, making no claims to beauty, ministered to her needs. The aged woman then said,—“ It is not the hand that is dipped in the brook, nor the hand made red with berries, nor the hand garlanded or perfumed with roses, that is most beautiful, but the hand that giveth to the poor.” As she thus spoke, her mask fell off, her staff was cast aside, her wrinkles vanished, and she stood before them, an angel of God. . . . It matters not whether the hand gives in money, or in kindly acts; in some cases, money would be quite useless, while kindness is priceless.

BEAUTIFUL THINGS.

Beautiful faces are those that wear,—
It matters little if dark or fair,—
Whole-souled honesty printed there.

Beautiful eyes are those that show,
Like crystal panes where hearth-fires glow,
Beautiful thoughts that burn below.

Beautiful lips are those whose words
Leap from the heart like songs of birds,
Yet whose utterance prudence girds.

Beautiful hands are those that do
Work that is earnest, and brave, and true,
Moment by moment, the long day through.

Beautiful feet are those that go
On kindly ministry to and fro,
Down lowliest ways, if God wills so.

Beautiful shoulders are those that bear
Ceaseless burdens of homely care
With patient grace and daily prayer.

Beautiful lives are those that bless ;
Silent rivers of happiness,
Whose hidden fountains but few may guess.

Beautiful twilight, at set of sun,
Beautiful goal, with race well run,
Beautiful rest, with work well done.

ELLEN P. ALLERTON.

July 5.

If thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him drink : for, in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.—ROM. xii. 20, 21.

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do.—LUKE xxiii. 34.

IF you have an enemy, treat him kindly, and you will make him your friend. You may not win him over at once, but continue your kindness and you will succeed. Repeated kindness will soften the hardest heart.

FORGIVENESS.

A red rose, drooping to the ground,
With delicate beauty flushed,
By a careless foot, at even tide,
Was trampled on, and crushed.

Christlike, the injured flower returned
No thorn-prick for the blow ;
But gave instead a sweet perfume
To him who laid it low.

July 6.

Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice.—PSA. lxv. 8.

HAYDN, the great composer, was asked:—"How is it that your music is so bright and happy?" He answered,—"Because all things around me,—all God's works,—are so bright and happy with beauty, and goodness, and love."

O world, as God has made it! All is beauty :
And knowing this is love, and love is duty.

JULY.

When the scarlet cardinal tells,
Her dream to the dragon-fly,
And the lazy breeze rocks the nest in the trees,
And murmurs a lullaby,—
It is July.

When the tangled cobweb pulls
The corn-flower's blue cap awry,
And the lilies tall lean over the wall
To bow to the butterfly,—
It is July.

When the heat like a mist-veil floats,
And poppies flame in the rye,
And the silver note in the streamlet's throat
Has softened almost to a sigh,—
It is July.

When the hours are so still, that Time
Forgets them, and lets them lie
'Neath petals pink, till the night-stars wink
At the sunset, in the sky,—
It is July.

SUSAN HARTLEY SWETT.

July 7.

For we are His (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.—EPH. ii. 10.

I HAVE a clock in my parlor, with a gilt frame and a glass case to cover it. Almost every one who sees it, says, "What a pretty clock!" But it has one great defect,—it will not go, and, therefore, as a clock, it is perfectly useless. Just as my clock does not answer the purpose for which it is made, which is to keep time,—so, many persons do not answer the purpose for which they are made. What did God make us for? He made us that we might love Him and serve Him, and if we do not love and serve Him, we do not answer the purpose for which He made us. We may be very pretty, and admired by others, but God is not pleased, and we can never be truly happy.

WHAT I WAS MADE FOR.

God made the little bird to sing,
Up in the trees so tall;
He made the castled snail to cling
Close to the garden wall.

He made the flower to charm the eye,
And scent the air around :
He made the tree so broad and high
To shadow all the ground.

He made the stars to cheer the night,
And yon dark sky adorn ;
He made the sun so warm and bright,
To ripen well the corn.

I cannot twinkle like a star,
Or blossom like the flowers ;
But God hath made me greater far,
And given me nobler powers :

Affection, reason, knowledge, will,—
Lord, Thou hast given to me ;
Then, shall not each Thy law fulfil,
And all be used for Thee ?

July 8.

Neglect not the gift that is in thee.—I TIM. iv. 14.

IF only one of the million flowers that bloom in the summer days, in the fields and gardens, refused to bloom, hiding its gift of beauty, the world would be a little less lovely. If but one of the myriad stars in the heavens should refuse to shine some night, keeping its beam locked up in its own breast, the night would be a little darker. . . . It makes a vast difference in the world whether the humblest of us be true or false in our life, whether we sing our one little note right or wrong, whether we speak our one little word, or keep silent. The smallest bar of song, breathed into the world, adds its fragment to the world's music. The right thing you did yesterday made the world a little better, made it easier, too, for other people to do right.

JAMES R. MILLER.

ALL TOGETHER.

One little sunbeam,
Gleam of glory flinging,
Could not chase the night away
And set the robins singing ;
Yet the whole great earth is bright,
In merry summer weather,
With a million sunbeams
Shining all together.

One little daisy
Heart of gold displaying
Could not gladden all the fields
With its lightsome swaying ;
Yet the meads are all alight
In merry summer weather,
With a million daisies
Blooming all together.

One sunny child-heart
In a world of sorrow,
Could not melt the clouds of grief
And bring a brighter morrow ;
Yet the world would blossom bright
As fields in summer weather
With a million loving hearts
Working all together.

ALICE M. EDDY.

July 9.

For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.
—2 THESS. iii. 10.

THIS day thou knowest ten commanded duties,—seest in thy mind *ten* things which should be done, for *one* thou doest : *Do* one of them ; this of itself will show thee ten others which can and shall be done. Know thy work, and do it !

THOMAS CARLYLE.

THE BOY AND THE BIRD.

" Go, weed in the garden till half after ten,"
Rob's mother said sharply,—" I'll not speak again."

" Dear me," said Rob, sighing,—" I wish I could be
The robin that's singing up there in the tree ;

" Birds never weed gardens, they never bring wood,
They do as I'd like to, and would, if I could ;

" They've nothing to trouble them,—only to sing,
And rock on the branch when they're not on the wing."

" See here, little boy," said the robin to Rob,
" Though you think I am idle, I'm planning a job ;

" Four nestlings to care for,—such great, hungry things !
There isn't much rest for a father-bird's wings ;

" The cats try to catch us,—the boys are as bad ;
Birds have work, wants, and worries like others, my lad.

" Be content as God made us,—as bird, boy or man,—
And do what needs doing, the best way we can."

EBEN E. REXFORD.

July 10.

If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.—PROV. XXIV. 10.

ROBERT BRUCE AND THE SPIDER.

KING BRUCE of Scotland flung himself down
In a lonely mood to think ;
'Tis true he was monarch and wore a crown,
But his heart was beginning to sink.

For he had been trying to do a great deed,
To make his people glad ;
He had tried, and tried, and could not succeed,
And so he became quite sad.

He flung himself into a deep despair,—
He was grieved as man could be ;
And, after a while, as he pondered there,
“ I'll give it up ! ” cried he.

Now, just at that moment, a spider dropped
With its silken cobweb clew ;
And the king, in the midst of his thinking, stopped
To see what the spider would do.

‘Twas a long way up to the ceiling dome,
And it hung by a rope so fine,
That, how it would get to its cobweb home,
King Bruce could not divine.

It soon began to cling and crawl
Straight up, with strong endeavor ;
But down it came, with a slipping sprawl,
As near to the ground as ever.

Up, up it ran, nor a second did stay
To make the least complaint,
Till it fell still lower ; and there it lay,
A little dizzy and faint.

Its head grew steady,—again it went,
And traveled a half-yard higher ;
‘Twas a delicate thread it had to tread,
And a road where its feet would tire.

Again it fell, and swung below ;
But up it quickly mounted,
Till, up and down, now fast, now slow,
Nine brave attempts were counted.

“ Sure,” said the king, “ that foolish thing
Will strive no more to climb,
When it toils so hard to reach and cling,
And tumbles every time.”

But up the insect went once more ;
Ah me ! 'tis an anxious minute ;
He's only a foot from his cobweb door,—
O, say ! will he lose or win it ?

Steadily, steadily, inch by inch,
Higher and higher, he got,
And a bold little run, at the very last pinch,
Put him into the wished-for spot.

“ Bravo, bravo ! ” the king cried out ;
“ All honor to those who try !
The spider up there defied despair,
He conquered, and why should not *I* ? ”

Thus Bruce of Scotland braced his mind ;
And gossips tell the tale,
That he tried once more, as he tried before,
And that time did not fail.

Pay goodly heed, all you who read,
And beware of saying, “ I can't ” ;
'Tis a cowardly word, and apt to lead
To idleness, folly and want.

ELIZA COOK.

July 11.

Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.—PROV. XX. 11.

THE good Mr. Wesley said that he dared no more *fret* than swear. His excellent mother, Susannah Wesley, had a large family of children, and never allowed them to fret. I think she was afraid the little faces would grow to look cross ; for, when lips pout often, they get a habit of pouting, and homely lines and wrinkles come to *stay*, and are silent telltales of an unpleasant disposition.

WHAT GRANDMOTHER SAYS.

Perhaps you'll hardly believe it all,—
But every one must know
That when my grandmother says a thing,
Of course it's exactly so.

She says, in all the great, great world,
She never has seen a place
Where things so sweet and lovely grow
As on a wee little face.

She says there's never a diamond
Under the shining skies,
That sparkles half as bright as those
She sees in bright little eyes ;

She never has seen, in all her life
Such white, little, dainty pearls
As peep from out the rosy lips
Of dear little laughing girls ;

She says she has never, never found
In a garden full of flowers,
A rose, so rosy, and sweet, and fresh,
As those little cheeks of ours ;

But then, she says these diamonds
And roses and pearls will grow
Ugly and dim and dull, (O dear !
How dreadful to see them so !)

Unless, with loving words and smiles
We keep them shining bright ;—
I think we'd better remember this,
For grandmother's always right.

July 12.

*Let all those that put their trust in Thee rejoice.—PSA.
v. 11.*

GOD is a kind Father. He sets us all in the places where He wishes us to be employed ; and that employment is truly “our Father's business.” He chooses work for every creature, which will be delightful to them, if they do it simply and humbly. He gives us always strength enough, and sense enough, for what He wants us to do ; if we either tire ourselves or puzzle ourselves, it is our own fault. And we may always be sure, whatever we are doing, that we cannot be pleasing Him if we are not happy ourselves.

JOHN RUSKIN.

MY BIRDS.

I lean from the window at morning
And hear in the street
The chirp of the tiny brown sparrows,
So cheery and sweet.

My birds! they flit gayly above me,
They twitter and call;
But the message they bring in the morning
Is sweetest of all;

For the sparrows chirp gayly—"Be cheerful,
Whatever befall;"
"Be strong," sing the swallows above me,
"God careth for all."
"Be trustful;" O, robin, low singing,
Your message is best;
Each day brings its work and its blessing;
Trust God for the rest.

Aids to Endeavor.

July 13.

I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me.—Psa. iii. 5.

A HAPPY "good-night" to all,—a prayer to the loving Heavenly Father for sweet sleep, in safety,—then to

"Stretch the tired limbs and lay the head
Upon our own delightful bed,"—

this is a beautiful ending for every day.

A glad "good-morning,"—thanks to God for the blessings of the night, and a prayer to Him to make us helpful and kind all the day long,—this is a beautiful beginning for every day.

GOOD-NIGHT AND GOOD-MORNING.

A fair little girl sat under a tree
Sewing as long as her eyes could see.
Then smoothed her work and folded it right,
And said, " Dear work, good-night, good-night ! "

Such a number of rooks came over her head,
Crying, " Caw, caw ! " on their way to bed,
She said, as she watched their curious flight,
" Little black things, good-night, good-night ! "

The horses neighed, and the oxen lowed,—
The sheep's " Bleat, bleat ! " came over the road ;
All seeming to say, with a quiet delight,
" Good little girl, good-night, good-night ! "

She did not say to the sun, " Good-night ! "
Though she saw him there like a ball of light ;
For she knew he had God's time to keep
All over the world, and never could sleep.

The tall pink foxglove bowed his head,
The violets courtesied and went to bed ;
And good little Lucy tied up her hair,
And said, on her knees, her favorite prayer.

And while on her pillow she softly lay,
She knew nothing more till again it was day,
And all things said to the beautiful sun,
" Good-morning, good-morning ! our work is begun ! "

LORD HOUGHTON.

(Richard Monckton Milnes.)

July 14.

There is that scattereth and yet increaseth ; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.—PROV. xi. 24.

A POET, who loved birds and all beautiful things, once wrote, in verse, this interesting tale:—Hundreds of years ago, there were many birds in Killingworth, a town of

old England. The farmers feared they would steal their grain. A meeting was held, and "hardly a friend in all that crowd" was found to speak for the poor birds. It was determined to destroy them all. . . . The summer came, with scorching heat, and brought myriads of insects, who soon "made the land a desert without leaf or shade." The next spring, they sent into all the country 'round, after birds, which were brought in wicker cages, and let loose in the town.

"Their songs burst forth in joyous overflow,
And a new heaven bent over a new earth,
Amid the sunny farms of Killingworth."

The poet tells us what one friend of the birds said at the meeting. Too late the farmers found that he was right, and that God never meant His beautiful songsters to be destroyed.

THE BIRDS OF KILLINGWORTH.

"The thrush that carols at the dawn of day
From the green steeples of the piny wood ;
The oriole in the elm ; the noisy jay,
Jargoning like a foreigner at his food ;
The bluebird balanced on some topmost spray
Flooding with melody the neighborhood ;
Linnet and meadow-lark, and all the throng
That dwell in nests, and have the gift of song ;

" You slay them all ! and wherefore ? for the gain
Of a scant handful, more or less, of wheat
Or rye, or barley, or some other grain,
Scratched up at random by industrious feet,
Searching for worm or weevil, after rain !
Or a few cherries, that are not so sweet
As are the songs these uninvited guests
Sing, at their feast, with comfortable breasts.

" Do you ne'er think what wondrous beings these ?
Do you ne'er think who made them, and who taught
The dialect they speak, where melodies
Alone are the interpreters of thought ?
Whose household words are songs in many keys,
Sweeter than instrument of man e'er caught !
Whose habitations in the tree-tops even
Are half-way houses on the road to heaven !

“ Think, every morning when the sun peeps through
The dim leaf-latticed windows of the grove,
How jubilant the happy birds renew
Their old melodious madrigals of love !
And when you think of this, remember too
‘Tis always morning somewhere, and above
The awakening continents, from shore to shore,
Somewhere the birds are singing evermore.

“ Think of your woods and orchards without birds !
Of empty nests that cling to boughs and beams,
As, in an idiot’s brain, remembered words
Hang empty, ‘mid the cobwebs of his dreams !
Will bleat of flocks, or bellowing of herds,
Make up for the lost music, when your teams
Drag home the stingy harvest, and no more,—
The feathered gleaners follow to your door ? ”

* * * * *

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

July 15.

The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy—
JAS. V. 11.

WE are never more like God than when we are doing good.

JOHN CALVIN.

AN EASTERN LEGEND.

There’s a tender Eastern legend,
In a volume old and rare,
Of the Christ-child in His garden
Walking with the children there.

And it tells,—this strange, sweet story,—
(True or false, ah, who shall say ?)
How a bird with broken pinion
Dead within the garden lay.

And the children, childish cruel,
Lifted it by shattered wing,
Shouting, " Make us merry music !
Sing, you lazy fellow, sing ! "

But the Christ-child bent above it ;
Took it in His gentle hand,
Full of pity for the suffering,
He alone could understand ;

Whispered to it,—oh, so softly !
Laid His lips upon its throat,
And the song-life, swift returning,
Sounded out in one glad note.

Then away, on wings unwearied,
Joyously it sang and soared,
And the little children, kneeling,
Called the Christ-child, " Master,—Lord ! "

GRACE DUFFIELD GOODWIN.

July 16.

Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.—LUKE vi. 36.

THE busy-body bees, the merry crickets and grasshoppers, and speckled butterflies, and all those innumerable tiny things which hide away among the leaves, and grass, and weeds ; the curious little squirrels, the shy and nervous rabbits, the chattering blue-jays and the gossiping woodpeckers, the cooing doves and the piping quails,—all these little things, filled with the same life which animates us, come from the same God to whom we also owe our being, life and breath. They are indeed our fellow-creatures,—our little brothers and sisters in feathers and furs, to whom we owe the duty of love, care and remembrance.

Our Dumb Animals.

WHO DID IT?

Who made the butterfly's delicate wing,
With its plumage so rich and gay?
Who taught the wood-lark to soar and sing,
And her nestlings to hide away?
Who hung the blooms on the apple-trees?
Who stored the sweets in the nectaries?
Who made the brooklet to sparkle and dance?
Who made the bee with her pouch and lance?
Who made the goldfish to bask in the sun?
The flowers, the shells, and pebbles,—each one?
And all for love? It was God!

Who broke the butterfly's lovely wing,
And laughed at the ruin wrought?
Who crushed the bee when she used her sting,
And the nest of the wood-lark sought?
Who stole her tender fledglings away,
And left them to die that summer day?
Who dammed up the course of the rippling brook?
Who caught the trout on a cruel hook?
Who stoned the minnows, and thought it fun?
Who chased the rabbits,—poor frightened Bun?
And all for sport?—God's child!

KATE LAWRENCE.

July 17.

Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.—JER. xxxi. 3.

JESUS talked of the blossoms and the birds to His disciples, but most tenderly of little children. I read so many love-words in the Bible that I am sure He loves and cares for me.

FIELD LILIES.

Lily bells! lily bells! swinging and ringing,
Sweet golden bells on the still summer air,—
Are ye calling the birds to their matins of singing,
Summoning nature to worship and prayer?

Lily bells! lily bells! daintily swaying,
Poising your petals like butterflies' wings,
As the breeze murmurs 'round you, pray, what is he saying?
Is he whispering love-words, and soft, pretty things?

Lily bells! lily bells! 'mid the long grasses
Gleaming like sunbeams in still shady bower,
Have you stolen your gold from the sun, as he passes?
Are you guarding your treasure in bud and in flower?

Lily bells! lily bells! bowing and bending,
Are ye nodding a welcome to me as I go?
Do ye know that my heart bears a love never-ending
For bright golden lily bells, all in a row?

Lily bells! lily bells! down in the meadows,
As I see your fair forms 'mid the mosses and brake,
My heart wanders back to the past, with its shadows,—
To Christ, and the wise, loving words that He spake.

“Consider the lilies,”—yes, this was His teaching,
The modest field-lilies that “toil not nor spin,”
“Yet even to them is My loving care reaching,
My heart takes the feeblest and lowliest in.”

Lily bells! lily bells! waving and swinging,
If Jesus, my Master, can watch over you,
I'll go to Him, daily, with gladness and singing,
Believing He'll love me and care for me too.

Lily bells! lily bells! bending and swaying,
Ring out your sweet peals on the still summer air;
I would ye might lure *all* to trusting and praying,
And teach them sweet lessons of God's loving care.

July 18.

Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, . . . I am the Lord that maketh all things.—ISA. xliv. 24.

IF I knew all that is to be learned from a daisy even,
I should be less a stranger to God than I am. All about

me, tree unto tree is uttering speech, and flower unto flower is showing knowledge. But it is in a language I do not understand, but which I shall remember, and which I shall learn the whole meaning of, hereafter.

WILLIAM MOUNTFORD.

THE DAISY.

Not worlds on worlds, in phalanx deep,
Need we to prove a God is here :
The daisy, fresh from winter's sleep,
Tells of His hand, in lines as clear.

For who but He who arched the skies,
And pours the day spring's living flood,
Wondrous alike in all He tries,
Could rear the daisy's purple bud ?

Mould its green cup, its wiry stem,
Its fringed border nicely spin,
And cut the gold-embossed gem,
That, set in silver, gleams within ?

And fling it, unrestrained and free,
O'er hill and dale, and desert sod,
That man, where'er he walks, may see,
In every step, the stamp of God ?

JOHN MASON GOOD.
(1764-1827.)

July 19.

And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food.—GEN. ii. 9.

I WAS a very lonely little girl, brought up on a large farm, with plenty of fine trees on it, that I used to love because they were big and beautiful and shady, and I could lean against them when I was tired, and "play house" under them ; but nobody ever suggested to me that the earth was a better place for me to live in because

of those trees, or that we had more springs of water, and better air to breathe, and needed all this foliage to make us healthy, and that the very leaf-mold in the woods, where I used to lie and look up through the branches at the flying clouds, was a part of the great plan of the universe to keep the ground moist and warm. Those trees meant the care of a great loving Being who had planned all this for me.

TREES.

Joy for the sturdy trees !
Fanned by each fragrant breeze,
 Lovely they stand !
The song-birds o'er them trill,
They shade each tinkling rill,
They crown each swelling hill,
 Lowly or grand.

Plant them by stream and way,
Plant where the children play
 And toilers rest ;
In every verdant vale,
On every sunny swale,
Whether to grow or fail,—
 God knoweth best.

God will His blessing send,—
All things on Him depend ;
 His loving care
Clings to each leaf and flower,
Like ivy to its tower ;
His presence and His power
 Are everywhere.

S. F. SMITH.

July 20.

The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.—PSA. xxiv. 1.

“My father is very rich,” said little Earl, as he walked by the side of his nurse. “All this land is his, and this house, and stable, and the lake.”

"My Father is also rich," said the nurse-girl, as she looked up to the sky, and away over the fields and woods. "The green fields and meadows are all His, the blue sky and golden sun, 'the cattle on a thousand hills,'—all these are His."

"And who is your Father?" asked Earl.

"He is the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth," was the good and gentle answer.

ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL.

Each little flower that opens,
Each little bird that sings,—
God made their glowing colors,
He made their tiny wings.
The purple-headed mountain,
The river running by,
The sunset, and the morning red
That brightens up the sky,—
The cold wind in the winter,
The pleasant summer sun,
The ripe fruits in the garden,—
He made them, every one.
The tall trees in the forest,
The meadows where we play,
The rushes by the river-side
We gather every day ;
Yes, all things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
And all things wise and wonderful,—
The Lord God made them all.

JOHN KEBLE.

July 21.

The Lord is good to all: and His tender mercies are over all His works.—Psa. cxlv. 9.

THE world is beautiful! The golden sunshine, the green earth covered with flowers, the trees laden with rich blossoms, the blue sky, and the bright water,—all are beautiful, and He who made them must be beautiful and good.

C.

GOD IS GOOD.

See the morning sunbeams lighting up the wood,
Silently proclaiming,—God is ever good.

Hear the mountain streamlet, in the solitude,
With its ripple saying,—God is ever good.

In the leafy tree-tops, where no fears intrude,
Merry birds are singing,—God is ever good.

Bring, my heart, thy tribute,—songs of gratitude,
While all nature utters,—God is ever good.

July 22.

Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God.—DEUT.
viii. 11.

“GRANDMOTHER,” said little Gretchen, “why do you call this beautiful flower, blue as the sky, growing by this brook,—‘a forget-me-not’?”

“My child,” said the grandmother, “once I accompanied your father, who was going on a long journey, to this brook. He told me that when I saw this little flower, I must think of him; so we have always called it the ‘forget-me-not.’” Said happy little Gretchen, “I am not parted from my parents, nor sisters, nor friends. I do not know whom I can think of, when I see the forget-me-not.” “I will tell you,” said her grandmother; “let it remind you of Him who made it. Every flower in the meadow says, ‘Remember God’; every flower in the garden and field says to us of its Creator,—‘Forget-me-not.’”

THE FORGET-ME-NOT.

A lovely little flow'ret
Blooms on our meadow green,
Its eye, just like the heaven,
So blue and clear is seen.

And tho' you hear no voices
 In that far lonely spot,
 The flower is something saying,—
 It says,—“Forget-me-not.”

July 23.

Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.—PROV. iii. 27.

LOVE's secret is to be always doing things for God, and not to mind because they are such very little ones.

FREDERICK W. FABER.

KATIE'S PART.

“What have you done, dear children?”
 The mother gently said,
 As she kissed her white-robed babes at night,
 And tucked them up in bed;
 “What have you done through all this day
 To help some one along the way?”

Then each one told of some kind deed,—
 A loving word just spoken;
 Some sacrifice for others' wants,
 Or gift of friendly token.
 But when 'twas Katie's turn to speak,
 A tear-drop glistened on her cheek.

“I cannot think of anything
 So *very* good to-day,”
 She sadly said: “only I helped
 A chicken find its way
 Back to its mother,—that was all;
 But it was lost, and O, so small!

“'Twas naughty when it ran away,—
 But, dear mamma, I know
 It felt so sorry, for it tried
 The right way back to go.
 You told us once we ought to seek
 To save the lost ones and the weak.

“ The little chicken looked distressed,
And how it cried, poor thing !
It was so glad to cuddle up
Under its mother’s wing ;
And I was happy when I found
‘Twas there with her all safe and sound.”

The children hid their smiles beneath
The bed’s white coverlet,
But the mother kissed her Katie
Just where the cheek was wet.

“ Your part,” she said, “ you too have done ;
God is well pleased, my little one ! ”

SUSAN TEALL PERRY.

July 24.

Love as brethren, be pitiful.—I PET. iii. 8.

A THING done for one’s self is done for time, but a thing done for another is laid up in eternity.

SOMETHING TO DO.

“ Something to do, mamma, something to do ! ”
Who has not heard the cry ?
Something to plan, and something to try !
Something to do when the sky is blue,
And the sun is clear and high ;
Something to do on a rainy day,
Tired of lessons or tired of play ;
Something to do in the morning walk,
Better than merely to stroll and talk.
For the fidgety feet, oh, something to do,
For the mischievous fingers something too ;
For the busy thought in the little brain,
For the longing love of the little heart,
Something easy, and nice, and plain ;
Something in which they can all take part ;
Something better than breakable toys,
Something for girls, and something for boys ;
I know, I know, and I’ll tell you too,
Something for all of you now to do !

First, you must listen ! Do you know
Where the poor sick children go ?
Think of hundreds all together,
In the pleasant summer weather,
Lying sadly, day by day,
Having pain, instead of play ;
No dear mother sitting near,
 No papa to kiss good-night ;
Brothers, sisters, playmates dear,
 All away, and out of sight ;
Little feet that cannot go
Where the pink-tipped daisies grow ;
Little eyes that never see
Bud or blossom, bird or tree ;
Little hands that folded lie
As the weary weeks go by.
What if you could send them flowers,
Brightening up the dismal hours ?
Oh, you cannot guess the power
Of a little simple flower !

* * * * *

Then away, away, the first fine day !
Follow the breeze that is out at play,
Follow the bird, and follow the bee,
Follow the butterfly, flitting free,
 For I think they know
Where the sweetest wild-flowers grow ;
Bluebells in the shady dingle,
Where the violet-odors mingle ;
Where the fairy primrose lamp
 Seems to light the hawthorn shade ;
Orchis in the meadow damp,
 Cowslip in the sunny glade ;
(But not the pale anemone,
For that will fade so speedily).
Hedge and coppice, lane and field,
Gather all the store they yield !
Buttercups and daisies too,
Though so little prized by you,
Will be gold and silver treasure
In their power of giving pleasure
To the poor, in city alleys,
Far away from hills and valleys,
Who have never seen them grow
Since their childhood, long ago ;

Or to children, pale and small,
Who never saw them grow at all!
And don't forget the fair green leaves
 That have their own sweet tales to tell,
And waving grass that humbly weaves
 The emerald robe of bank and dell.

* * * * *

And when the box is gone away,
 The pleasure need not all be past,
 I think it will not be the last!
Just set to work another day!
 And send some more
 From the beautiful store
Which God keeps sending you, fresh and new,
 And thank Him too
That He has given you "something to do!"

FRANCES R. HAVERGAL.

(There are, in some cities, flower-missions, to distribute to the poor and to the sick in hospitals, flowers gathered and sent by country-children.)

July 25.

I am the Lord their God, and will hear them.—
ZECH. x. 6.

WHEN we call on God, He bends down His ear to listen, as a father bends down to listen to his little child. Yes, God listens.

ELIZABETH CHARLES.

THE VIOLET'S PRAYER.

A thirsty little violet
 Looked up into the sky;
So blue it was, so far away,
 So radiant and so high!

She did not speak the want she felt,
 But One there was who knew;
He sent the pretty little flower
 Bright drops of evening dew.

The violet looked up and smiled
In thankfulness, and then
Down over all her velvet robes
Came the soft summer rain.

Then all the pretty violets
And all the gay bright flowers
Looked beautiful and fair again
Under the summer showers.

When flower or bird or little child
Looks up in prayer to heaven,
God listens ; surely as He lives
An answer shall be given.

E. J. RICHMOND.

July 26.

Thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the Lord ; that it may be well with thee.—DEUT. vi. 18.

THERE is a great power in the little word “No,” when it is spoken resolutely and courageously. It has often been like a giant rock by the sea, as it has met and hurled back the mighty waves of temptation. Whatsoever is wrong, we must meet with a firm, strong “No”; but whatever is right, we should welcome into our life with a hearty, cheerful “Yes.”

When right is known and not done, or when evil is done instead of good, then “conscience doth make cowards of us all.” But when there grow the fair plants of kindly thoughts, gentle speech and brave deeds bravely done,—then conscience makes heroes,—noble men like Luther and Cromwell, Washington and Lincoln.

IDA REED SMITH.

DO RIGHT.

Yes, courage, boy,—courage, and press on thy way ;
There is nothing to harm thee,—nothing to fear ;
Do all which Truth bids thee, and do it to-day ;
Hold on to thy purpose, do right, persevere !

July 27.

Now I know in part ; but then shall I know even as also I am known.—*1 COR. xiii. 12.*

THE pleasantest things in this world are pleasant thoughts ; and the greatest art in life is to have as many of them as possible.

THOUGHTS.

I think that the world was finished at night,
Or the stars would not have been made ;
For they wouldn't have thought of having the light,
If they hadn't first seen the shade.

And then again, I alter my mind
And think perhaps it was day,
And the starry night was only designed
For a little child, tired of play.

And I think that an angel, when nobody knew,
With a window pushed up very high,
Let some of the seeds of the flowers fall through,
From the gardens they have in the sky ;

For they couldn't think, *here*, of lilies so white,
And such beautiful roses, I know ;
But I wonder, when falling from such a height,
The dear little seeds should grow.

And then when the face of the angel was turned,
I think that the birds flew by,
And are singing to us the songs they learned
On the opposite side of the sky.

And a rainbow must be the shining below
Of a place in Heaven's floor that is thin,
Right close to the door where the children go,
When the dear Lord lets them in.

And I think that the clouds that float in the skies
Are the curtains that they drop down,
For fear when we look we should dazzle our eyes
As they each of them put on their crown.

I do not know why the water was sent,
Unless, perhaps, it might be
God wanted us all to know what it meant
When we read of the "Jasper Sea."

O ! the world where we live is a lovely place
But it oftentimes makes me sigh,
For I'm always trying *causes* to trace,
And keep thinking " wherefore ? " and " why ? "

Ah ! dear child, the longing you often feel
Is the stir of immortal wings ;
But infinite Love, one day, will reveal
The most hidden and puzzling things.

You have only your duty to try and do,
To be happy, and rest content ;
For, by being good, and by being true,
You will find out *all that is meant.*

WHITON.

July 28.

Thou (Lord) hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor.—Psa. viii. 5.

How very different you are from a pebble, a rose, a watch, or your dog, Tray ! You can understand me when I speak to you. You can speak to me, so that I know exactly what you mean. You can think, and can learn to read and write, and to do a great many different things, and you can keep on learning. You know

what right and wrong is. You feel happy when you do right, and unhappy when you do wrong. . . . That something inside of you, which thinks and keeps thinking, is your *soul*. Your soul will live forever. It will never, never die.

THOMAS H. GALLAUDET.

THE CHILD'S WORLD.

Great, wide, beautiful, wonderful world,
With the wonderful water around you curled,
And the wonderful grass upon your breast,—
World, you are beautifully drest !

The wonderful air is over me,
And the wonderful wind is shaking the tree ;
It walks on the water, and whirls the mills,
And talks to itself on the tops of the hills.

You, friendly earth ! how far do you go
With the wheat-fields that nod, and the rivers that flow ?
With cities and gardens, and cliffs, and isles,
And people upon you for thousands of miles ?

Ah, you are so great, and I am so small,
I tremble to think of you, World, at all !
And yet, when I said my prayers to-day,
A whisper inside me seemed to say :—

“ You are more than the Earth, tho' you are such a dot ;
You can *love* and *think*, and the earth cannot.”

MATTHEW BROWNE.

July 29.

And God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good.—GEN. i. 31.

SEE how things in the world of nature live up to their best, and, in their sphere, fulfil a perfect work. Now, as at the first, it may be said of these,—that they are “*good*.” But how shall *we* gain such a benediction?—Only as we, too, live up to our *best*.

EDWIN H. CHAPIN.

WHAT MAKES THE SUMMER?

It is not the lark's clear tone
Cleaving the morning air with a soaring cry,
Nor the nightingale's dulcet melody, all the balmy night,
 Not these alone
Make the sweet sounds of summer ;
But the drone of beetle and bee, the murmurous hum of the
 fly,
And the chirp of the cricket hidden out of sight,—
These help to make the summer.

Not roses, redly blown,
Nor golden lilies, lighting the dusky mead,
Nor proud, imperial pansies, nor queen-cups quaint and rare ;
 Not these alone
Make the sweet sights of summer ;
But the countless forest leaves,—the myriad wayside weeds
And slender grasses springing up everywhere,—
These help to make the summer.

One heaven bends above ;
The lowliest head oftentimes hath sweetest rest ;
O'er song-bird in the pine, and bee in the ivy low,
Is the same love,—it is all God's summer ;
Well pleased is He, if we patiently do our best.
So hum, little bee, and low, green grasses grow,—
You help to make the summer.

MARIETTA HOLLEY.

July 30.

Strengthen Thou me according unto Thy word.—Psa. cxix. 28.

THOU must do thy little duties to the best of thy strength, and in thy sweet child's struggle to do right, and keep from wrong, Jesus will help thee. But what is thy duty? Hurt no living thing, spoil no beautiful thing, say no unkind thing; forgive, be kind, be loving, be truthful, be joyful, and do not *think* thyself very good, *but be good.*

—ROBERT BIRD.
From Jesus the Carpenter of Nazareth.

THE LOWLY LIFE.

A little flower so lowly grew,—
So lonely was it left,
That heaven looked like an eye of blue,
Down in its rocky cleft.

What could the little flower do,
In such a darksome place
But try to reach that eye of blue
And climb to kiss heaven's face?

And there's no life so lone and low,—
But strength may still be given,
From narrowest lot on earth to grow
The straighter up to Heaven.

GERALD MASSEY.

July 31.

Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.—JAS. i. 4.

STRUGGLE diligently against your impatience, and strive to be amiable and gentle, in season and out of season, toward every one, however much they may vex and annoy you; and be sure God will bless your efforts.

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

GOOD-BYE, SWEET DAY.

Good-bye, sweet summer-day,
A long good-bye!
I sit and watch you go
Wrapped in your sunset glow;
I love you,—love you so,—
Why can't you stay?

Ah, such a dear, good day!
It should have held
No idleness nor fret,
No bad thoughts to regret;
I wish it had not,—yet
I fear to say.

SUSAN COOLIDGE.

August 1.

Trust in the living God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.—I TIM. vi. 17.

WHAT shall I give Thee for all these thousands of benefits? I would I could serve Thee all the days of my life.

THOMAS À KEMPIS.

A SONG IN COLOR.

There's a purple cloud with a fringe of pink,
And a gray cloud touched with red ;
There's an amber mystery in the west,
And a deep blue overhead ;
There are great green breakers at my feet,
All flecked with the purest white ;
There's the dancing sea, as blue as the sky,
And a speck of a sail in sight.

There's a baby moon, in a sapphire bed,
And a dark cloud waiting nigh ;
There's a ruby flash on the emerald hill,
As a robin shimmers by.
There are diamonds sparkling in the sand,
A topaz glint on the sea ;
And my heart o'erflows with love to the One
Who wrought such beauty for me.

August 2.

O Lord, how manifold are Thy works ! in wisdom hast Thou made them all.—PSA. civ. 24.

IF we must go without many things, those that we enjoy are very sweet, and I bless God for them every day,—every day consider myself happy to have woods, and streams, and meadows.

EUGÈNIE DE GUÈRIN.

IN THE WOODS.

There's a whisper of leaves in the woods to-day,
Where fresh cool breezes have softly strayed,
And sunbeams and shadows for hours have played ;
Come and listen with me ! away ! away !

Loveliest things in the woods are seen,—
Bright red berries, and velvet moss ;
And a lady-slipper may chance to toss
Its dainty pink blossom amid the green.

Pretty pine-cones and acorn-cups lie,—
The squirrels have left them, here and there
On the pine-needle carpet that scents the air,—
And creeping Jenny goes wandering by ;

Indian-pipes, so funny and white,
And Prince's Pine, so glossy and straight ;
Sweet fern and modest wild violets wait
Where rosy laurel is full in sight.

List to the music, from far and near,
The cheery chant of the insect choir,
The happy hum, that, like distant lyre,
Chimes in with the wild bird's note so clear.

Let us join in the song of each happy thing ;
Breathe with the flowers the fragrant air ;
God made the world joyous, and good, and fair,
And listens with love when His children sing.

August 3.

They helped every one his neighbor ; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage.—ISA. xli. 6.

THERE was once a great forest on a mountain-side, with a brook flowing through it. One morning all the things in the wood thought they would tell what they could do to praise God. . . . The oaks told how they were so strong that they were made into boards which made the great ships that sail over the ocean.

The pines told how their straight, tall trunks made the masts of the ships. The firs spoke of the pleasure they gave at Christmas time to many happy children. The violets and ferns told of the joy they brought to those who picked them. The brook spoke of its good work in watering the meadows. All the things in the wood had spoken, but the mosses were silent. "What do you do?" asked the trees and flowers. "Our work is very small," was the answer. "We can only catch the little drops of water, and hold them, so that when the sun shines hot, and the brook dries, we may give you moisture."

Theirs was humble work, but how useful! So a little child may do a humble work, and fill a small place, but still be very useful.

O WHAT CAN LITTLE HANDS DO?

O what can little hands do
To please the King of Heaven?
The little hands some work may try
To help the poor in misery:
Such grace to mine be given!

O what can little lips do
To please the King of Heaven?
The little lips can praise and pray,
And gentle words of kindness say:
Such grace to mine be given!

O what can little eyes do
To please the King of Heaven?
The little eyes can upward look,—
Can learn to read God's Holy Book:
Such grace to mine be given!

O what can little hearts do
To please the King of Heaven?
The hearts, if God His Spirit send,
Can love and trust their Saviour, Friend;
Such grace to mine be given!

Though small is all we *can* do
To please the King of Heaven,
Let hearts, and hands, and lips unite
To serve the Saviour with delight :
Such grace to mine be given !

August 4.

I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, according to the multitude of His loving kindnesses.—ISA. lxiii. 7.

HE who has conferred a kindness should be silent ; he who has received one should speak of it.

SENECA.

TO WHOM SHALL WE GIVE THANKS ?

A little boy had sought the pump
From whence the sparkling water burst,
And drank with eager joy the draught
That kindly quenched his raging thirst ;
Then gracefully he touched his cap,—
“ I thank you, Mr. Pump,” he said,
“ For this nice drink you’ve given me ! ”
(This little boy had been well bred.)

Then said the pump :—“ My little man,
You’re welcome to what I have done ;
But I am not the one to thank,
I only help the water run.”
“ Oh, then,” the little fellow said,—
(Polite he always meant to be),
“ Cold water, please accept my thanks,—
You have been very kind to me ! ”

“ Ah ! ” said Cold Water, “ don’t thank me !
Far up the hillside lives the spring
That sends me forth with generous hand
To gladden every living thing.”
“ I’ll thank the spring, then,” said the boy,
And gracefully he bowed his head ;
“ Oh, don’t thank me, my little man,”
The Spring with silvery accents said.

“ Oh, don’t thank me,—for what am I
Without the dew and summer rain?
Without their aid I ne’er could quench
Your thirst, my little boy, again.”
“ Oh, well, then,” said the little boy,
“ I’ll gladly thank the Rain and Dew; ”
“ Pray don’t thank us,—without the sun,
We could not fill one cup for you.”

“ Then, Mr. Sun, ten thousand thanks
For all that you have done for me! ”
“ Stop! ” said the Sun, with blushing face,
“ My little fellow, don’t thank me;
’Twas from the ocean’s mighty stores
I drew the draught I gave to thee! ”
“ Oh, Ocean, thanks! ” then said the boy,—
It echoed back, “ not unto me! ”

“ Not unto me, but unto Him
Who formed the depths in which I lie;
Go, give thy thanks, my little boy,
To Him, who will thy wants supply.”
The boy took off his cap, and said
In tones so gentle and subdued,—
“ Oh, God, I thank Thee for this gift,—
Thou art the Giver of all good! ”

August 5.

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.—PSA. lxi. 2.

BE sure of God. With simple, loving worship, by continual obedience, by purifying yourself even as He is pure,—creep close to Him, keep close to Him. Be sure of God, and nothing can overthrow or drown you.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

IN THE ROCK.

Crowned monarch by sunlight and lichens gray,
Stands a sentinel rock where pathways meet;
Low bowed at his feet quiet shadows stay
Amid delicate mosses, clustered sweet,
And stately green grass bends low its head,
As the whispering breezes so lightly tread.

Built of the mosses and hidden by grass,
From the sight of idly curious eyes,
In a sheltered nook of the rocky mass,
The nest of a little brown sparrow lies ;
Ungentle winds and sun are apart
From that small mossy home in the rock's great heart.

Perhaps I should envy that little nest
Its peaceful crevice, all quiet and warm
If the thought came not when I long for rest :—
“ I, too, have a covert from wind and storm ; ”
So, with the Psalmist, I also cry,—
“ Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I ! ”

JULIA E. SARGENT.

August 6.

Turn not to the right hand nor to the left ; remove thy foot from evil.—PROV. iv. 27.

Abhor that which is evil ; cleave to that which is good.
—ROM. xii. 9.

SURELY nobody can always know what is right. Yes, you always can for to-day, and if you do what you see of it to-day, you will see more of it and more clearly to-morrow.

JOHN RUSKIN.

If a thing is not right, don't do it ; if it is not true, don't say it.

WHAT THE QUAIL SAYS.

Whistles the quail from the covert,
Whistles with all his might,
High and shrill, day after day,
“ Children, tell me what does he say ? ”
Ginx,—(the little one, bold and bright,
Sure that he understands aright).—
“ He says, ‘ Bob White ! Bob White ! ’ ”

Calls the quail from the corn-field
 Thick with its stubble set;
 Misty rain-clouds floating by
 Hide the blue of the August sky;
 "What does he call, now, loud and plain?"
 Gold-locks,—"that is the sign of rain!"
 He calls, 'More wet! more wet!'"

Pipes the quail from the fence-top
 Perched there, full in sight,
 Quaint and trim, with quick, bright eye,
 Almost too round and plump to fly,
 Whistling, calling, piping clear,—
 "What do *I* think he says? My dear,
 He says, 'Do right! do right!'"

CLARA DOTY BATES.

August 7.

Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary: praise Him in the firmament of His power.—PSA. cl. 1.

THE Psalmist tells us over and over again to praise the Lord, and adds: "It is *good* to sing praises unto our God: for it is pleasant." Let us then praise Him for every beautiful thing, the clouds, the birds, the flowers, the sunshine; for the loved ones He has given us, and for His own kind care of us; for forgiving our sins when we ask Him; for all His dear promises to us, and for the hope of living with Him forever in Heaven!

THE WINGED WORSHIPERS.¹

Gay, guiltless pair,
 What seek ye, from the fields of heaven?
 Ye have no need of prayer,—
 Ye have no sins to be forgiven.

Why perch ye here
 Where mortals to their Maker bend?
 Can your pure spirits fear
 The God ye never could offend?

Ye never knew
The crimes for which we come to weep ;
 Penance is not for you,—
Blest wanderers of the upper deep.

To *you* 'tis given
To wake sweet nature's untaught lays,—
 Beneath the arch of heaven
To chirp away a life of praise.

Then spread each wing,
Far, far above, o'er lakes and lands,
 And join the choirs that sing
In yon blue dome not reared with hands.

Or, if ye stay
To note the consecrated hour,
 Teach me the airy way,
And let me try your envied power.

Above the crowd,
On upward wing, could I but fly,
 I'd bathe in yon bright cloud,
And seek the stars that gem the sky.

'Twere Heaven indeed,
Through fields of trackless light to soar ;
 On Nature's charms to feed,
And Nature's own great God adore.

CHARLES SPRAGUE.

¹This poem was suggested to the poet by seeing two birds fly into church during service.

August 8.

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven : for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.—MATT. V. 45.

THE sun does not stay to be implored to impart his heat and light. By his example, do all the good thou canst, without staying till it be asked of thee.

EPICETUS.

SUNBEAM AND DEWDROP.

O sunbeam, O sunbeam !
I would be a sunbeam too !
When the winter chill
Hushes lark and rill ;
When the thunder-showers
Bow the weeping flowers ;
When the shadows creep
Cold, and dark, and deep,—
We would follow, swift and bright,
Bending all our love and light,
Chasing winter, grim and hoary,
Shining all the tears away,—
Turning all the gloom to glory,
All the darkness into day.

O dewdrop, O dewdrop !
I would be a dewdrop too !
When the fatal glow,
Sultry, still, and slow,
Makes the scentless flowers
Droop in withering bowers,
Leaf, and shade, and bloom
Touched with early doom,—
We would follow, sweet and bright,
Blending life, and love, and light ;
Making what was parched and dreary
Glad and lovely, fresh and fair,
Softly cheering what was weary,
Sparkling, star-like, everywhere.

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

August 9.

Is not thy wickedness great ? For thou hast not given water to the weary to drink.—JOB xxii. 5, 7.

Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world : for I was an hungered and ye gave Me meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink.—MATT. xxv. 34, 35.

THERE are people who would do great acts ; but, because they wait for great opportunities life passes, and the acts of love are not done at all.

FREDERICK W. ROBERTSON.

THE WATER AND THE FLOWER.

One quiet eve, some years ago, whilst lingering by a stile
That ran along a wayside path,—to watch the clouds
awhile,
Ere thought had lifted from my heart the shadow of her
wing,
I saw a child,—a little girl,—returning from the spring ;
Her well-filled pitcher lightly pressed her curls of silken hair,
Supported by a tiny hand,—and she was very fair,
With something in her sunny face pure as the sky above,
And something in her gentle eye that guardian angels love.

A little flower blossoming a step or so aside
This happy child of innocence with sudden joy espied ;
And letting down her pitcher, with a sweet and joyous song
She watered it, half-laughingly, and gaily tripped along ;
The flower seemed to raise its head, bowed by a summer's
sun,
And smile beneath the act which she unconsciously had
done,—
Whilst wandering on, with fairy tread, as merry as before,
I saw her pass the garden-gate, and close the cottage door.

O, often when this little scene has crossed my thoughts
again,
I've wondered, if, with all the love that warmed her spirit
then,
This little girl has tripped thro' life, as joyous to the last,
Refreshing all the weary hearts that met her as she passed ;
If, with unconscious tenderness, her heart has paused to
bless
The poor amid their poverty, the sad in their distress,
Still following up God's teachings, day by day, and hour by
hour,
Foreshadowed in that simple scene,—the water and the
flower ;

If, with a song as pure and sweet, that voice has hushed to rest

The troubles of an aching heart,—a sorrow-laden breast,—

If, to the wayside wanderer, where'er her steps have led
The pitcher has been lowered ever kindly from her head,
O holy, happy charity ! how many pleasures lost
By those who have not known thee, had been worthy of the cost !

How many heads a blessing from a better world have borne
Whilst lowering the pitcher to the weary and the worn !

Thou who hast stood beside God's spring of blessings, day by day,

To fill the pitcher of thy wants, and carry it away,—

The poor and the dejected,—whom God hath willed to roam,—

Are resting by the wayside that leads thee to thy home ;

O, let thy heart beat ever quick, in actions kind to be !

Remember Him whose bounty has at all times followed thee !

And deem it not a trouble by the wayside,—in the town,—

To linger where the weary are, and let the pitcher down.

August 10.

If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted, according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.—2 COR. viii. 12.

IN Thy book, O Lord, are written all that do what they can, though they cannot do what they would.

ST. BERNARD.

THE MINISTRY OF HASSAN.

By a clear well, beside a lonely road,
Hassan, the humble, had his poor abode.

He could not roam abroad, in search of fame,
And noble deeds,—for he was bent and lame.

No eyes smiled back to his, at night or morn,
And evermore he moaned,—“ Why was I born ?

“ What good can I achieve ? Why do I live,
Who have no strength to strive, no gold to give ?

“ Others are opulent, beloved, renowned,—
What can I reach ? Why cumber I the ground ? ”

Even then a honey-bee, in passing, fell,
Burdened with pollen, in his crystal well ;

And Hassan raised it, as it struggling lay,
Dried its wet wings, and sped it on its way ;

And, still repining, sought his daily toil,
Digging and watering the needy soil

About his grape-vine, that he might one day
Share its rich fruit with those who came that way.

He pruned the cruel thorns and briers which tore
The feet and robes of travelers by his door :

He picked the sharp stones from the trodden way
Where barefoot pilgrims plodded, day by day,

And beggar children, with unsandaled feet
Wandered along, in weariness and heat ;

He brought them, in his carven cocoa-shell,
Draughts of sweet water, from his living well.

He found the lost lamb, wandering from its own,
And soothed its shivering by his chimney stone ;

Spared the poor moth that sought his taper's blaze,
And fed the hungry birds in winter days ;

Saved the weak fledgling, fallen from the nest,
Calm'd its wild fear, and warmed it in his breast ;

Rescued the firefly from the spider's snare,
And sent it on its shining path in air :

And was a helper and a friend indeed,
To every suffering creature in its need,—

Yet, all the while, bewailed his lack of worth,
And marveled what his use could be on earth.

But, when his blameless days had all gone by,
And Hassan sought his bed of boughs to die,

A tall white angel stood beside him there,
And said,—“Thou hast had many ills to bear,

“O Hassan, and hast grieved in solitude
Because thou couldst not do great deeds of good;

“But, since thou hast consoled the humblest things,
Which weep, or crawl on earth, or soar on wings,

“Cherishing all with thy wide charity,—
Behold, beloved, thou didst it unto Me.”

Then Hassan saw how blindly he had wept
His narrow powers. And he smiled and slept.

ELIZABETH AKERS.

August 11.

Godliness with contentment is great gain.—1 TIM. vi. 6.

Do not run after happiness, but seek to do good, and you will find that happiness will run after you. The day will dawn, full of expectation,—the night will fall, full of repose. This world will seem a very good place, and the world to come a better place still.

JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.

BE CONTENT.

I would I were a note
From a sweet bird's throat!
I'd float on forever
And melt away never;
I would I were a note
From a sweet bird's throat!

But I am what I am !
As content as a lamb ;
No new state I'll covet,
For how long should I love it ?
No, I'll be what I am,—
As content as a lamb !

August 12.

The Lord make you to increase and abound in love, one toward another.—**I THESS.** iii. 12.

As unexpected flowers which spring up along our path, full of freshness, fragrance and beauty, gladden us,—so kind words, gentle acts, and sweet dispositions make glad the sacred spot called home.

Aids to Endeavor.

VACATION DAYS.

It isn't enough that flowers bloom,
That grasses wave,—
That ten whole weeks of happy time
Our own, we have ;
Something else the summer must hold,
Sweeter than honey, and brighter than gold.

It isn't enough that glad birds sing,
That brooklets run,—
That lessons are thrown to the careless winds,—
Every one ;
Something else the summer must hold,
Sweeter than honey, and brighter than gold.

It isn't enough that sea-shells gleam,
On sandy shore ;
That tossing waves on the ocean's breast
Tumble and roar ;
Something else the summer must hold,
Sweeter than honey, and brighter than gold.

But it is enough that a loving heart
In work and play,
Should make all others surrounding them
Happy alway;
This is the charm the summer must hold,
Sweeter than honey, and brighter than gold.

MARGARET SIDNEY.

August 13.

*Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said,
It is more blessed to give than to receive.—ACTS xx. 35.*

ONCE there was a king who had a little boy whom he loved. He gave him beautiful rooms to live in, and pictures, and toys, and books. He gave him a pony to ride, and a row-boat on a lake, and servants. He provided teachers who were to give him knowledge that would make him good and great. But for all this, the young prince was not happy. He wore a frown wherever he went, and was always wishing for something he did not have. At length, one day, a magician came to court. He saw the boy and said to the king: "I can make your son happy; but you must pay me a great price for telling the secret."

"Well," said the king, "what you ask, I will give." So the price was paid. Then the magician took the boy into a private room, and wrote something with a white substance on a piece of paper. Next he gave the boy a lighted candle, and told him to hold it under the paper, and read what was written. He read these words:

"Do a kindness to some one every day."

The prince made use of the secret, and became the happiest boy in the kingdom.

SELFISH AND LEND-A-HAND.

Little Miss Selfish and Lend-a-Hand
Went journeying up and down the land ;
On Lend-a-Hand the sunshine smiled,
The wild flowers bloomed for the happy child,
Birds greeted her from many a tree,—
But Selfish said, " No one loves me ! "

Little Miss Selfish and Lend-a-Hand
Went journeying home across the land ;
Miss Selfish met with trouble and loss,—
The weather was bad, the folks were cross.
Lend-a-Hand said, when the journey was o'er,
" I never had such a good time before ! "

MARY F. BUTTS.

August 14.

Who hath despised the day of small things ?—ZECH. iv. 10.

BE diligent, after thy power, to do deeds of love.
Think nothing too little, nothing too low, to do lovingly
for the sake of God.

E. B. PUSEY.

THE DAISY.

I am but a little daisy
The children know me well ;
I blossom by the roadside wall
Within a little dell ;
I'm but a flower of humble mien,
And little worth,—I know,
But still the Lord so wise and great
Hath bidden me to grow.

There's many a flower more stately far,
And many a one more fair,
And many a one whose fragrance floats
More sweetly on the air ;
But since the Lord the daisy made
I have my mission still.
No other flower in all the vale
The daisy's place may fill.

I am but a little daisy
 And yet, perhaps I may
 Give pleasure to some humble child,
 Or cheer some traveler's way.
 Though in the garden I'm not found,
 I may by waysides blow,
 And some poor heart may thank the Lord
 Who made the daisy grow.

August 15.

And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.—MATT. iii. 16, 17.

REMEMBER, my child, how the Spirit of God came to Jesus,—and know that His Spirit will also come to thee, if thou dost ask Him; not as a dove, not with a sound, but felt, though unseen. And in moments of silent waiting upon Him, thou wilt hear a voice within thee, saying, “Thou art My child,”—and the voice is the voice of God.

ROBERT BIRD.

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

He came in semblance of a dove,
 With sheltering wings outspread,
 The holy balm of peace and love
 On earth to shed.

He comes, sweet influence to impart,
 A gracious, willing guest,
 While He can find one humble heart
 Wherein to rest.

And His, that gentle voice we hear,
 Soft as the breath of even,
 That checks each thought, that calms each fear,
 And speaks of Heaven.

* * * *

Spirit of purity and grace,
Our weakness, pitying, see ;
O make our hearts Thy dwelling-place,
And meet for Thee.

HARRIET AUBER.

August 16.

I will hear what God the Lord will speak.—Psa. lxxxv. 8.

I SAW a little spotted turtle sunning himself in the shallow water. I lifted the stick in my hand to kill the harmless reptile ; for, though I had never killed any creature, yet I had seen other boys, out of sport, destroy birds, squirrels, and the like, and I had the disposition to follow their wicked example ; but, all at once, something checked my little arm, and a voice within me said, clear and loud, “It is wrong !” . . . I hastened home to my mother, and asked what it was that told me it was wrong. She wiped a tear away, and, taking me in her arms, said : “Some men call it conscience, but I prefer to call it the voice of God in the soul of man. If you listen and obey it, then it will speak clearer and clearer, and always guide you aright ; but, if you turn a deaf ear, and disobey, then it will fade out, little by little, and leave you all in the dark, and without a guide. Your life depends on heeding this little voice.”

THEODORE PARKER.

THE VOICE WITHIN.

The still small voice that speaks within,
I hear it when, at play,
I speak the loud and angry word,
That drives my friend away.

If falsehood whispers to my heart
To tell a coward lie,
To hide some careless thing I've done,
I hear the sad voice nigh.

If selfishness would bid me keep
What I should gladly share,
I hear again the inner voice,
And then with shame forbear.

The voice within,—the voice within,—
O, may I have a care ;
It speaks to warn from every sin,
And God has placed it there.

I thank Thee, Father, for this friend,
Whom I would always heed ;
O, may I hear the slightest tone,
In every time of need.

FANNY FAGAN.

August 17.

*A word spoken in due season, how good is it !—PROV.
xv. 23.*

THERE is always some one to smile at, somebody to give your chair to, somebody to whom a book, a flower, or a kind word would be a comfort. . . . A quiet, sympathetic look or smile, many a time unbars a heart that needs help which you can give.

JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

He who wants to do a great deal of good, at once, will never do anything.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

A PICTURE.

The old man, sitting by the way,
Was weary on that summer day.

A little girl smiled to him there
And shyly came to stroke his hair.

“ You are so tired ! ” crooned the child ;
“ I was,” he whispered, “ till you smiled.”

August 18.

Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.—JER. xxiii. 24.

THE beauty of all beautiful things says: “God has been here!” But the life in the lowliest living thing—in the tiniest moss which puts forth a fresh green star to-day—in the little opening leaf which has burst the gummy casing in which it was encased yesterday and flutters in the air and sun this morning, with the crumples of its long winter packing not yet fluttered out of it,—in the trembling snowdrop which a touch can crush, but which all the weight of the inanimate earth could not keep from clearing its way up to the light,—life, in its lowliest developments, says not merely “God has been here,” but “God is here!”

ELIZABETH CHARLES.

GOD IS EVERYWHERE.

A mother was singing her boy to sleep,—
The little brown head had begun to nod,
When he suddenly opened his eyes and asked,
“Please, mamma, do tell me,—where is God?”

Then the mother answered him soft and low,—
“In the sea, my child,—in the earth and air;
Where the wild birds sing, and the flowers blow,
For, darling, God is everywhere.

“He quiets the waters, as, long ago,
He calmed the waters of Galilee;
He touches the sky, and the sun and moon
Shine forth at His bidding, faithfully.

“He treads the earth, and the grass grows green,
He teaches the swallow to build its nest,
And He shows the bee where the honey hides,
Down deep in the clover’s purple breast.

“ For nothing is lowly enough to miss
His tender eyes ; He is everywhere ;
And He loves and cares for everything,
The weeds as well as the roses, dear.”

“ So, whenever you hear the robin sing,
Or the cricket chirping from leaf and stem,
They are chanting, my child, a psalm of praise
To the God who watches over them.”

ANNA A. BALLAM.

August 19.

Without Me ye can do nothing.—JOHN xv. 5.

THERE is a flower of the orchid family, more wonderful than any other of which I have read. It is called the “Flower of the Holy Ghost.” These flowers are borne on a tall spike, several feet in height,—about ten flowers growing on one stalk. They are pure white and waxy, and are about the size of a silver dollar. Each flower is turned sidewise, so as to form a kind of arched canopy. In the centre of this pure white blossom, right under the arch, nestles a tiny, white dove, with its head, beak, breast and wings as perfectly formed as if they had been cut out of marble. The wings are very delicate and are daintily spotted with crimson. The blossom has a spicy fragrance, and, when placed in a room, fills it with perfume. . . . The people living in Central America and Mexico, where it grows, have a great reverence for the blossom. They believe that, if they pluck it with a prayer, it will give them a blessing ; but, if they pluck it carelessly, or thoughtlessly, it will bring them a curse.

Does not *anything* we do prayerfully, help to make us better ? and does not the doing of anything in a careless manner make us more careless, and so prove an injury to us ? It may do us good to keep in our hearts the thought of this pure, white “Flower of the Holy Ghost.”

E. J. ALLING.

A PRAYER.

O, Jesus, dear Jesus, we need Thee each day ;
We need Thee to guide us or else we shall stray ;
Our hearts are so sinful, they lean to the wrong ;
Then keep us, dear Jesus, because Thou art strong.

O Jesus, dear Jesus, we need Thee each hour ;
We need Thee to guard, lest our foes overpower ;
With many temptations our ruin they seek,—
Then keep us, dear Jesus, because we are weak.

O Jesus, dear Jesus, we need Thee always,—
A guide and a guard to the end of our days ;
Thou only canst keep us in life and in death,—
O keep us, dear Jesus, and then we are safe.

August 20.

Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.—EPH. iv. 32.

REMEMBER never to be tired of forgiving and of being kind, and, if thy brother will not listen to thee, then forgive him in thy kind little heart, and think no more about it, and so thou wilt be like Jesus who forgave all His enemies.

ROBERT BIRD.

FORGIVENESS.

I sat in the evening cool
Of the heat-baked city street,
Musing, and watching a little pair
Who played on the wall at my feet.
A boy, the elder, of strong, rough mould,—
His sister, a blossom sweet.

When, just in the midst of their play,
Came an angry cry and a blow
That bruised the cheek of the little maid,
And caused bright tears to flow,
And brought from my lips, quick, sharp reproof
On the lad who had acted so.

He stood by, sullen and hard,
 While the maid soon dried her tear ;
 He looked at her with an angry eye,—
 She timidly drew near,—
 “Don’t be cross, Johnny !” (a little sob),
 “Let me fordive ‘oo, dear !”

And the cloud is passed and gone,
 And again in their play they meet,
 The strong, rough boy wears a kinder mien,
 And brighter the maiden sweet,
 While a whisper has come from the heart of God
 To a man, a man on the street.

August 21.

Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.—I TIM. vi. 11.

WHAT has been lent thee, my child ? Let us count up :—a loving heart, a quick mind, a clever tongue, a strong body, willing feet, a glad face and bright eyes. Surely these are as good as pounds of gold ! What wilt thou do with them ? With thy kind heart, thou wilt love Jesus ; with thy quick mind thou wilt think about God ; with thy clever tongue, speak of Him ; with thy strong body, serve Him, running His messages with willing feet, and, day by day, thou wilt find His service more and more joyful.

ROBERT BIRD.

AN OLD-FASHIONED LESSON.

Why do the honey-bees suck from the clover
 Sweets upon sweets, thro’ the long summer day ?
 They work to have honey, a plenty and over,
 When all the bright summer has vanished away.
 Some day, little ones, you’ll be children no longer ;
 But what you are now will ever be part
 Of what you shall be,—and stronger and stronger
 The seed of the future still grows in each heart.
 Then fill your young lives full of sunshine and beauty ;
 Think purely, speak kindly, act nobly each day ;
 With glad, willing hearts, do each little duty,
 That when childhood is gone, its sweetness may stay.

August 22.

Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price.—I PET. iii. 3, 4.

THE most beautiful faces I have ever known, and whose pictures are hung in my memory framed in tenderest remembrances, have been those which were brightened and softened by such spirits of loveliness, that even strangers paused to look again and wonder at the sweetness which was *not of feature*.

KITTY.

Alas ! little Kitty,—do give her your pity,—
Had lived seven years and was never called pretty !
Her hair was bright red, and her eyes were dull blue,
And her cheeks were so freckled
They looked like the speckled
Wild lilies, which down in the meadow-lands grew.
If her eyes had been black, if she'd only had curls,
She'd have been,—so she thought,—the most happy of
girls.

Her cousins around her, they pouted and fretted,
But they were all pretty, and they were all petted ;
While poor little Kitty, though striving her best
To do her child's duty,
Not sharing their beauty,
Was always neglected and never caressed.
All in vain,—so she thought,—was she loving and true,
While her hair was bright red and her eyes were dull blue.

But one day alone, 'mid the clover blooms sitting,
She heard a strange sound, as of wings 'round her flitting ;
A light not of sunbeams, a fragrance more sweet
Than the wind's blowing over
The red-blossomed clover,
Made her thrill with delight from her head to her feet ;
And a voice, sweet and rare, whispered low in the air,
" See that beautiful, beautiful child, sitting there ! "

Thrice blessed little Kitty ! She almost looked pretty !
Beloved by the angels, she needed no pity !
O juvenile charmers, with shoulders of snow,
 Ruby lips, sunny tresses,
 Forms made for caresses,—
There's one thing, my beauties, 'tis well you should
 know ;
Though the world is in love with bright eyes and soft hair,
It is only *good* children the angels call fair !

MARIAN DOUGLAS.

August 23.

*Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow
a nest for herself where she may lay her young.—
Psa. lxxxiv. 3.*

DOST thou not see the little plants, the little birds, the ants, the spiders, the bees, working together to put in order their several parts of the universe ? And art thou unwilling to do the work of a human being ?

MARCUS ANTONINUS.

LESSONS FROM BIRDS AND BEES.

I love to see the little goldfinch pluck
The groundsel's feathered seed, and twit and twit ;
And soon, in bower of apple-blossoms perched,
Plume his gay suit, and pay us with a song,—
I would not hold him prisoner for the world !

The chimney-haunting swallow, too, my eye
And ear well pleases. I delight to see
How suddenly he skims the glassy pool,
How quaintly dips, and with a bullet's speed
Whisks by. I love to be awake, and hear
His morning song, twittered to dawning day.

But, most of all, it wins my admiration
To view the structure of this little work,—
A bird's nest. Mark it well, within, without,—
No tool had he that wrought, no knife to cut,
No nail to fix, no bodkin to insert,

No glue to join ; his little beak was all,—
And yet, how nicely finished ! What nice hand,
With every implement and means of art
And twenty years' apprenticeship to boot,
Could make me such another ?

Mark the bee !
She, too, an artist is,—a cunning artist,
Who at the roof begins her golden work
And builds without foundation. How she toils,
And still from bed to bed, from flower to flower,
Travels the livelong day ! Ye idle drones,
Who rather pilfer, than your bread obtain
By honest means, like these, behold and learn
How grand, how fair, how honorable it is
To live by industry ! The busy tribes
Of bees, so emulous, are daily fed
Because they daily toil. And bounteous heaven,
Still to the diligent and active, good,
Their very labor makes the cause of health.

JAMES HURDIS.

August 24.

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.—LUKE xvi. 10.

WHATEVER your duty is, you cannot be faithful to God, unless you do your work as well as you can. . . . “Be thou faithful” is the word that rings from heaven in every ear, in every smallest piece of work we are doing.

JAMES R. MILLER.

LININGS.

Nay, nay, dear child, I cannot let you slight
Those inner stitches on your gown’s fair hem,
Because, you say, they will be out of sight,
And no stern critic will discover them.

You do but build a most inviting hedge
Behind which falsehood and deceit may lurk,
When you embroider fair the *outer edge*,
And to the *inner*, give no honest work.

The silken thread of habit which you wear
So lightly now, upon your careless youth,
Will strengthen, strand by strand ; then have a care !
Else it may throttle the sweet soul of truth.

I hold that every stitch untruly set,
Weaves a soiled thread along your web of fate ;
And each deceitful seam may prove a net
To hurt and hinder,—trust me,—soon or late.

Ah, dearest child, on everything you do,
Let the white seal of honor stamp its grace ;
Keep all your soul as clean with Heav'n's dew,
As the pink flower of your tender face.

God makes no clumsy linings,—mark this bloom !
A fairy's glove ; and tho' it grieves my heart
To send the smallest blossom to its tomb,
We'll tear the dainty little glove apart.

In this, and every flower that we behold,
From crimson robe to pansy's purple vest,
God sews the velvet on the inner fold,
And makes His linings fairer than the rest.

Is it not perfect,—from the slender stem
To the brown dapples on the curling rim ?
God folds not carelessly the foxglove's hem,—
Then try, my little child, to be like Him !

MAY RILEY SMITH.

August 25.

Honor thy father and mother ; which is the first commandment with promise ; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.—EPH. vi. 2, 3.

A MOTHER'S love comes with the baby at the very beginning of its little life. Nestling it closely to her bosom, the mother guards it tenderly, and watches it, night and day. She soothes its pain, and lovingly kisses away its tears. She patiently sings sweet lullabies, till the sleepy

eyelids close, tho' the beautiful air and sunshine out-of-doors, or the merry voices of friends seem to call her away from the darkened room. She waits longingly for baby's first smile, and still more longingly for its first word. She is one with her child in its play, its walks, and, by and by, in its lessons. When, grown to manhood, or womanhood, it perhaps leaves the home-nest, a mother's love and a mother's prayers go with the precious child,—warm, true, and faithful, to the end of life.

“Shall I take your love to your mother?” said a lady visitor, who was going to see the mother of a little child of three years. “*She has my love,*” was the reply.

OUR MOTHERS.

Hundreds of stars in the lovely sky,
Hundreds of shells on the shore together,
Hundreds of birds that go singing by,—
Hundreds of birds in the sunny weather.

Hundreds of dewdrops to greet the dawn,
Hundreds of bees in the purple clover,
Hundreds of butterflies on the lawn,
But only one mother, the wide world over!

August 26.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness : for they shall be filled.—MATT. v. 6.

DID you ever see a plant growing at the window in a crock, and observe how it bends towards the light? If you turn the crock around so that the plant bends inward towards the room, after a day or two you go to the plant, and it will have changed its direction, and instead of bending into the room, it will be bending out towards the window. Now this plant feeds on the light from the sun, and, on that account, it reaches out towards the sun.

So, if you hunger after that which is good, you will reach out after God, just as the plant reaches out after the sun.

SYLVANUS STALL.

THE DAISY.

Daisy is "the eye of day,"—
Turning to the sun alway,
Feasting on his warmth and light,—
This the daisy's dear delight.

Like the daisy may I be
Always turning, Lord, to Thee,
When from sleep I daily rise,
Seeking Thee with opening eyes.

Beauty, fragrance, life divine,
Dwell wherever Thou dost shine ;
Make me thus Thy daisy flower,
Bright and beauteous every hour.

When my day of life is done,
Glowing in the setting sun,
Still, in hope, I'll gaze on Thee !
Beam, O Saviour, beam on me !

CARDINAL NEWMAN.

August 27.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.—Psa. li. 2.

A TRAVELER once went with a party into a coal mine. On the side of the shaft, a perfectly white plant was found growing. "How is this?" exclaimed the traveler. "Here where the coal-dust is continually flying about, how can this little plant remain so pure and white?"

"Look here, sir," said a miner, and as he spoke he threw a handful of coal-dust upon the plant. Not a particle remained upon it. Then the visitors repeated the

experiment with exactly the same result,—the coal-dust would not cling.

On the white plant, there was something that appeared like a fine enamel, and to this not the tiniest speck could adhere. Living there amid clouds of black dust, its snowy whiteness remained unchanged. . . . Beautiful as is the thought of this pure blossom, it is not so lovely as a white life in a sin-stained world. Let us remember that the same God who made and kept the little plant stainless amid clouds of black dust, can make our hearts pure, and keep our lives free from sin.

THE WHITE BLOSSOM.

Be pure as the flower, little child !
Look up to the dear God above thee
Who tenderly, truly, doth love thee,
And ask Him to keep thee forever,
That dark sin may touch thee,—oh, never !
He'll keep thee pure, loving and mild.

Be sweet as the flower, little one !
The sight of thee,—winsome and cheery,—
Will gladden the sad and the weary;
Will shew all, the sweetness of duty,
As thou stand'st, in thy gladness and beauty,
Until thy pure mission is done.

August 28.

Commit thy way unto the Lord ; trust also in Him ; and He shall bring it to pass.—Psa. xxxvii. 5.

THE very smallest thing that troubles you may be brought to your Heavenly Father. And you may be sure that He will lovingly take it and bear it for you, so that you may go away trustful and happy after you have spoken to Him about it.

LEAVE IT WITH HIM.

Yes, leave it with Him !
 The lilies all do,
 And they grow,—
 They grow in the rain,
 And they grow in the dew,
 Yes, they grow :
 They grow in the darkness, all hid in the night,
 They grow in the sunshine, revealed by the light,
 Still they grow.

They ask not your planting,
 They need not your care
 As they grow ;
 Dropped down in the valley,
 The field,—anywhere,—
 There they grow.
 They grow in their beauty, arrayed in pure white,
 They grow clothed in glory by heaven's own light,—
 Sweetly they grow.

The Little Pilgrim.

August 29.

But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.—PHIL. iv. 19.

EVERYTHING seemed singing in words I could not help feeling,—“God is good to us all ; He gives twigs to the ants and grain to the birds, and makes the trees their palaces, and teaches them to sing ; and will He not care for you ? ”

ELIZABETH CHARLES.

LITTLE FIELD PREACHERS.

Only the grasses,—
 Blossoming grasses,
 Loading with beauty and incense the air ;
 Each little preacher
 An eloquent teacher
 Of the good God and His marvelous care.

"If He so clothe us,
If He so clothe us,"—
Softly they murmur, in solemn accord,
"Shall not your Father
Clothe you much rather,
Child of His promises, heir of His word?"

"If He so dress us,
If He so bless us,"—
Lily and grasses in unison sing,—
"Why should you borrow
Care for the morrow,
Child of eternity, heir of the King?"

"Dearest of teachers,
Christ's little preachers,
Learning His wisdom, I sit at your feet;
Never a sorrow
Nor fear will I borrow,—
No anxious thought for my raiment and meat.

"He, whose good pleasure
Bids me seek treasure
Laid up in Heaven,—regardeth my need:
God, for the raven
Hath food, and a haven;
Surely His child He will shelter and feed."

ELLA IVES.

August 30.

And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us.—I JOHN iv. 16.

YOUR mother and father might place you in a room where the walls are all blank, with nothing on the floor, and not a single ornament to be seen anywhere, and yet this room might protect you from the storms and the cold; but because they love you, therefore they make the room very beautiful and attractive. Just so it is with God. In the creation of the world, He did not make the abode of His children blank and bleak, but He rendered it very beautiful by planting flowers everywhere.

GOD'S LOVE.

There's not a flower that decks the vale,
There's not a beam that lights the mountain,
There's not a shrub that scents the gale,
There's not a wind that stirs the fountain ;
There's not a hue that paints the rose,
There's not a leaf around us lying,
But in its use or beauty shows
True love to us, and love undying.

GERALD GRIFFIN.

August 31.

Take ye from among you an offering unto the Lord : whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the Lord.—Ex. xxxv. 5.

GOD measures all work done for Him, by the *love* with which it is done.

THE DOG (BEAU) AND THE WATER-LILY.

The noon was shady ; and soft airs
Swept Ouse's silent tide,
When, 'scaped from literary cares,
I wandered on his side.

My spaniel, prettiest of his race,
And highest pedigree,
(Two nymphs adorned with every grace
That spaniel found for me).

Now wantoned, lost in flags and reeds,
Now, starting into sight,
Pursued the swallow o'er the meads,
With scarce a slower flight.

It was the time when Ouse displayed
His lilies, newly blown ;
Their beauties I intent surveyed,
And one I wished my own.

With cane extended far, I sought
To steer it close to land ;
But still the prize, tho' nearly caught,
Escaped my eager hand.

Beau marked my unsuccessful pains,
With fixed, considerate face,
And puzzling, set his puppy brains
To comprehend the case.

But, with a cherup clear and strong,
Dispersing all his dream,
I thence withdrew, and followed long
The windings of the stream.

My ramble ended, I returned :
Beau, trotting far before,
The floating wreath again discerned,
And, plunging, left the shore.

I saw him, with that lily cropped,
Impatient swim to meet
My quick approach ; and soon he dropped
The treasure at my feet.

Charmed with the sight, "The world," I cried,
" Shall hear of this, thy deed :
My dog shall mortify the pride
Of man's superior breed ;

" But chief *myself* I will enjoin,—
Awake at duty's call,
To show a love, as prompt as thine,
To *Him* who gives me *all*."

WILLIAM COWPER.

September 1.

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men.—GAL. vi. 10.

" Do all the good you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can, in every place you can." This is the advice given by old Scotch David to his lassie, and is good for us also.

LITTLE DEEDS.

Not mighty deeds make up the sum
Of happiness below ;
But little acts of kindness,
Which any child may show.

A merry sound, to cheer the babe
And tell a friend is near,—
A word of ready sympathy,
To dry the childish tear,—

A glass of water timely brought,—
An offered easy-chair,—
A turning of the window-blind,
That all may feel the air,—

An early flower, unasked, bestowed,—
A light and cautious tread,—
A voice to gentlest whisper hushed,
To spare the aching head,—

O, deeds like these, tho' little things,
Yet purest love disclose,
As fragrant perfume on the air
Reveals the hidden rose.

Our Heavenly Father loves to see
These precious fruits of love ;
And, if we only serve Him here,
We'll dwell with Him above.

Hymns for Mothers and Children.

September 2.

He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things ?—ROM. viii. 32.

THE great Martin Luther, taking a rose in his hand, said :—“A man, who could make one rose like this, would be accounted most wonderful ; and God scatters countless such flowers around us ! But the very infinity of His gifts makes us blind to them.”

LIFE'S COMMON THINGS.

A pink and crimson sunset cloud,
A fair young face amid the crowd,
A moment's glimpse of mountain blue,
Ere houses tall shut out the view,
A flower, behind a window-pane
When all without is dark with rain,
A bluebird, poised on airy wings,—
How beautiful life's common things !

A letter from a distant land,
A cordial grasp of friendly hand,
A happy daydream, pure and fair,
Though but a "castle in the air" ;
A word, that gives us courage new,
A smile that beams as fair as true,
A voice that hope and sunshine brings,—
How good, how true, life's common things !

FLORENCE M. WRIGHT.

September 3.

The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble : and He knoweth them that trust in Him.—NAHUM i. 7.

"GOD is good, whatever I may think sometimes," said a little deaf girl to herself, speaking aloud, as she often did when alone among the pines. "He loves me; I can hardly tell why I am so sure of it,—I suppose He tells me so. So I know it is all right for me to grow deaf, if He loves me. I don't suppose He wishes me to suffer, but perhaps there is some reason why it has to be, that I could not understand if He should explain it to me. God loves me, and I love Him, and I am going to trust Him to do what is right with His little girl. My favorite verse is, 'Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.' I'm not afraid," she ended happily, "and I am going to look, and look, with all my might, and see everything, because there are a great many more beautiful things to see than to hear, and even if there weren't,—God loves me, and I'm not afraid!"

JANE PRITCHARD DUGGAN.

WHAT DO THEY SAY?

Hark! hark! my children, hark!
When the sky has lost its blue,
What do the stars say in the dark?
"We must sparkle, sparkle through."

What do the leaves say in the storm,
Tossed in rustling heaps together?—
"We must keep the violets warm,
Till they wake in fairer weather."

What do little birdies say,
Flitting through the gloomy wood?—
"We must sing the gloom away;
Sun or shadow, God is good."

September 4.

What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? and when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.—LUKE xv. 4, 5.

ON the glacier I saw a strange, beautiful sight,—the parable of the ninety and nine reacted to the letter. One day we were making our way with ice-axe and alpen-stock down the glacier, when we observed a flock of sheep following their shepherd over the intricate windings between crevices, and so passing from the pastures on the one side of the glacier to the pastures on the other. The flock had numbered two hundred, but on the way one of the sheep was lost. One of the shepherds asked us if we had seen it. Fortunately, one of our party had a field-glass; with its aid we discovered the lost sheep in a tangle of brushwood, on the mountain side. It was beautiful to see how the shepherd, without a word, left his hundred and ninety-nine sheep on the glacier waste (knowing they would stand there perfectly still and safe), and went clambering back after the sheep until he found it; and he actually put it on his shoulder and returned, rejoicing.

Here was our Lord's parable enacted before our eyes, though the shepherd was all unconscious of it, and it brought the Lord's teaching home to us with a vividness which no one can realize, but those who saw the incident.

MY SHEPHERD.

The King of love, my shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never ;
I nothing lack if I am His
And He is mine forever.

Where streams of living water flow,
My ransomed soul He leadeth,
And where the verdant pastures grow
With food celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish, oft I strayed,
But yet in love He sought me,
And on His shoulders gently laid,
And home, rejoicing, brought me.

And so thro' all the length of days,
Thy goodness faileth never ;
Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise,
Within Thy house forever.

HENRY WILLIAM BAKER.

September 5.

Love suffereth long and is kind ; love envieth not ; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.—I COR. xiii. 4, 5.

WHATEVER any one else does or says,—*I must be good.*

MARCUS AURELIUS.

BE GOOD.

Be good, be good, my bright-eyed boy,
Roaming the fields in thy childish joy ;
Laugh, shout, as you bound over meadow and wood,
Be merry as you will ; but, O, be good !

Rob not the nest that your quick eyes see,
Perched on the boughs of yon chestnut-tree ;
Bruise not the butterfly's tender wing,
Harm not even the smallest thing.
Be good to all, e'en to bird and bee,
Even as God is good to thee.

Be good, my little girl, be good,
Be not selfish, nor vain, nor rude ;
Ne'er from those lips let a cross word fall,
Be patient, and humble, and kind to all.

Ne'er let that brow with a frown be dark ;
Be cheerful and blithe as the warbling lark ;
Ever be gentle and pure as the dove,
Your words and your actions full of love.
"Be good to all," let your motto be,
Even as God has been good to thee.

September 6.

I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also : I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding also.—I COR. xiv. 15.

ALL our birds were singing this morning while I was at my prayers. This accompaniment pleases me, though it distracts me a little. I stop to listen; then I begin again, thinking that the birds and I are alike singing a hymn to God, and that perhaps those little creatures sing better than I. But the charm of prayer, the charm of communion with God,—they cannot enjoy that! One must have a soul to feel it. This happiness, that the birds have not, is mine.

EUGÉNIE DE GUÉRIN.

WORDS.

The robin repeats his two beautiful words,
The meadow-lark whistles his own refrain ;
And, steadily, over and over again,
The same song swells from a hundred birds.

Bobolink, chickadee, blackbird and jay,
Thrasher and woodpecker, cuckoo and wren,—
Each sings its word, or its phrase, and then
It has nothing further to sing or say.

Into that word, or that sweet little phrase,
All there may be of its life must crowd ;
And low and liquid, or hoarse and loud,
It breathes its burdens of joy and praise.

A little child sits in his father's door,
Chatting and singing, with careless tongue ;
A thousand musical words are sung,
And he holds unuttered a thousand more.

Words measure life, and they measure its joy ;
Thou hast more joy in thy childish years
Than the birds of a hundred tuneful spheres,—
So sing with the beautiful birds, my boy !

J. G. HOLLAND.

September 7.

Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God : but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.—3 JOHN 11.

A “FRAGRANT charity,” indeed, is that of the English lady who scatters the seeds of wild flowers wherever she goes. All the rest of us, who choose, can scatter likewise the sweet wild flowers of kindness.

FLOWERS AND WEEDS.

Have you ever heard what the fairies say,
Little girl, little boy ?
Oh, hear and heed !
For each smile you wear on your face to-day,
There's a flower grows ;
For each frown, a weed.

So to make this world like a garden bright,
Little girl, little boy,
Keep frowns away.
Oh, the loving lips that can say to-night,
“ We've scattered flowers o'er the earth to-day.”

GEORGE COOPER.

September 8.

God answereth him in the joy of His heart.—ECCL. v. 20.

GOOD temper is like a sunny day ; it sheds its brightness on everything.

W. G. WILLS.

A WEATHER RECEIPT.

When it drizzles and drizzles,
If we cheerfully smile,
We can make the weather,—
By working together,—
As fair as we choose, in a little while ;
For who will notice that clouds are drear,
If pleasant faces are always near ?
And who will remember that skies are gray,
If he carries a happy heart all day ?

September 9.

Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.—LUKE xi. 35.

If I had been made a firefly, it would not become me to say,—“ If God had only made me a star, to shine always, then I would shine ! ” It is my duty, if I am a firefly, to fly and sparkle, and fly and sparkle,—not to shut my wings down over my phosphorescent self, because God did not make me a sun or a star.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

TO A FIREFLY.

Against the boundless night
Thou, with stout heart, doth set thy tiny flame ;
Brave little beacon ! thy one drop of light
Doth put my life to shame.

Though small thy lamp,
No brightest star may vaunt itself o'er thee,
As home, belated, to his grassy camp
Thou lightest the tired bee.

Thy mission no man knows
To judge of thee. The mites thy critics are ;
To the small folk that populate yon rose
Perhaps thou art a star.

Atom of the same light
That floods the world from the bright sun at noon,
Above the insect-cities, thou, to-night,
Dost hang like a white moon.

The world of mites is glad
To see in its low heaven thy small spark ;
My useless life,—a smoking torch,—doth add
But darkness unto dark.

WILLIAM C. BRYANT.

September 10.

Be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work ; for I am with you.—HAGGAI ii. 4.

Do little things now ; so shall big things come to thee by and by, asking to be done.

Persian Proverb.

WHAT THE LITTLE THINGS SAID.

“ I'll hie me down to yonder bank,”
A little raindrop said,
“ And try to cheer that lonely flower,
And cool its mossy bed ;
Perhaps the breeze may chide me,
Because I am so small,
But surely I may do my best,
For God has work for all.”

“I may not linger,” said the brook,
 “But ripple on my way,
And help the rills and rivers all
 To make the ocean spray.”
“And I must haste to labor,”
 Replied the busy bee,
“The summer days are long and bright,
 And God has work for me.”

If little things that God has made
 Are useful in their kind,
Oh, let us learn a simple truth,
 And bear it in our mind :
That every child can praise Him,
 However weak or small ;
Let each with joy remember this,—
 The Lord has work for all.

FANNY J. CROSBY.

September 11.

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.
—ROM. xiv. 17.

THE kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, joy. Righteousness, of course, is just doing what is right. Any boy who does what is right has the kingdom of God within him. Any boy, who, instead of being quarrelsome, lives at peace with the other boys, has the kingdom of God within him. Any boy whose heart is filled with joy because he does what is right, has the kingdom of God within him.

HENRY DRUMMOND.

LOOK UP.

There is hope in the world for you and me ;
There is joy in a thousand things that be ;
There is fruit to gather from every tree,—
 Look up, my boy, look up !

There is care and struggle in every life ;
With temper and sorrow the world is rife ;
But no strength cometh without the strife ;
 Look up, my boy, look up !

There's a place in the land for you to fill ;
There is work to do, with an iron will ;—
The river comes from the tiny rill,—
 Look up, my boy, look up !

There are bridges to cross, and the way is long,
But a purpose in life will make you strong ;
Keep e'er on your lips a cheerful song ;
 Look up, my boy, look up !

Speak ill of no one ; defend the right ;
And have the courage, as in God's sight,
To do what your hands find, with your might ;
 Look up, my boy, look up !

SARAH K. BOLTON.

September 12.

Let none that wait on thee be ashamed.—Psa. xxv. 3.

IT is possible for the humblest of us to do our duty.

FREDERICK W. FARRAR.

A LESSON.

A dying buttercup cried to the sun :
“What am I good for? What have I done
 To make life worth the living?
You hang aloft in the great blue sky,
Lighting the world with your one big eye,
 And you,—you are always giving;
But I bloom here in the meadow grass,
The babies smile on me as they pass;
But my life will soon be done, alas!
 And what was the use of living?”

The sun looked down on the little sun
That shone in the grass ; it was only one
Among a great many others ;
Said he, " It is wrong to thus despair,—
The great All-Father placed you there ;
You and your little brothers,—
He meant you should blossom there in the grass,
For the babies to smile on, as they pass,
Or to be in the bunches that each small lass
Carries to tired mothers.

" God hung me here in the great blue sky,
To light the world with my one big eye,
And show men how they're living ;
But He put you down in the meadow lot ;
The earth is fairer than if you were not ;
Beauty and joy you are giving.
I must see to the work He has given me,
You do what the dear Lord asks of thee ;
Then all will be as it ought to be,
And life will be worth the living."

September 13.

*Trust ye in the Lord forever : for in the Lord Jehovah
is everlasting strength.—ISA. xxvi. 4.*

WE should remember that the blessings which have gone are not all that God has for us. This summer's flowers will all fade, by and by, when winter's cold breath smites them ; we shall not be able to find one of them in the fields or gardens, during the long, cold, dreary months to come ; yet we shall know, all the while, that God has other flowers preparing, just as fragrant and lovely as those which have perished.

SEPTEMBER.

The cricket chirps all day ;—
" O fairest summer, stay !"
The squirrel eyes askance the chestnuts browning ;
The wild fowl fly afar
Above the foamy bar,
And hasten southward ere the skies are frowning.

Now comes a fragrant breeze
Thro' the dark cedar-trees,
And 'round about my temples fondly lingers,
 In gentle playfulness
 Like to the soft caress
Bestowed in happier days by loving fingers.

Yet, tho' a sense of grief
Comes, with the falling leaf,
And memory makes the summer doubly pleasant,
 In all my autumn dreams,
 A future summer gleams,
Passing the fairest glories of the present.

GEORGE ARNOLD.

September 14.

That we . . . speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him, in all things, which is the head,—even Christ.—EPH. iv. 15.

EVERY attempt to make others happy,—every sin left behind, every temptation trampled under foot, every step forward in the cause of what is good, is a step nearer to Heaven.

DEAN STANLEY.

THE OAK.

The oak-tree boughs once touched the grass,
 But every year they grew
A little farther from the ground,
 And nearer to the blue.

So live, that you each year may be,
 While time glides swiftly by,
A little farther from the earth
 And nearer to the sky.

September 15.

He that walketh with wise men shall be wise.—PROV.
xiii. 20.

With the pure, thou wilt shew thyself pure.—PSA.
xviii. 26.

WE know that friends who love one another become like to each other ; they catch the very tones of each other's voices ; they exchange the very look of each other's countenances ; features the most dissimilar acquire a strange likeness of expression. So it is with our souls, if we live in the habit of prayer ; that is, of conversing and speaking with our Divine Friend. We become like Him.

CARDINAL MANNING.

A ROADSIDE LESSON.

I have read, in an Eastern tradition,
That a man, as he walked by the way,
Picked up from the dust of the roadside
A bit of unsightly clay.

As he held it between his fingers,
All at once, it is said that he cried,—
" Whence hast thou this beautiful fragrance ? "
" I have dwelt with the rose ! " it replied.

And I said in my heart,—" Here's a lesson ;
For even the commonest clay,—
If it dwell with the things that are sweetest,—
Shall, in time, become fragrant as they.

" And lives that may now be unsightly,
By communion with all that is pure,
Shall be touched with a beauty eternal,
That through all the years shall endure."

NELLIE F. WELLS.

September 16.

Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones ; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven.—
MATT. xviii. 10.

WE all know that we have each our guardian angel, who watches over us ; but we must also remember that all the angels, with one accord, care for our well-being.

JOHN CALVIN.

THE CHILD AND THE ANGELS.

The Sabbath's sun was setting low
Amidst the clouds at even ;
"Our Father," breathed a voice below,—
"Our Father who art in Heaven."

Beyond the earth, beyond the clouds,
Those infant words were given ;
"Our Father," angels sang aloud,—
"Father, who art in Heaven."

"Thy kingdom come," still from the ground,
That childlike voice did pray ;
"Thy kingdom come," God's hosts resound
Far up the starry way.

"Thy will be done," with little tongue,
That lisping love implores ;
"Thy will be done," the angelic throng
Sing from the Heavenly shores.

"Forever," still those lips repeat
Their closing evening prayer ;
"Forever," floats in music sweet,
High midst the angels there.

CHARLES SWAIN.

September 17.

Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun.—ECCL. xi. 7.

It is morning ; the sun has arisen, and comes forth from his chambers in the east, shining on all, and for all in this great, wide world. Let me give thanks to God who has made me alive, who has kept me through the past night, and brought me to see the pleasant light of another day. To Him belong my first morning thoughts ; like the flowers which hold up their heads to the morning sun,—like the birds who warble their praises when they see his beams, so will I lift up my heart to Him who cares for all, and sing His praises “whose tender mercies are over all His works.” Let me, this day, be earnest and persevering in my efforts to do and to be good.

Matins and Vespers.

SUNSHINE SONG.

When I'm softly sleeping,
In the early morn,
Through my window creeping
A sun ray comes, new-born.
It gently says, “Good-morning ! ”
Then, with a golden light,
Peeping through my curtain,
Makes my chamber bright.

Welcome, little sunbeam !
Kindly hast thou come,
Bringing cheerful sunshine
From thy far-off home.
Gentle little sunbeam,
Gladly I would be
Pure, and warm, and loving,
Helpful, just like thee.

September 18.

Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation.—MATT. xxvi. 41.

Do not quarrel with your temptations ; set yourselves

resolutely to face them manfully, and however powerful they may be, by the Lord's help, you will be able to overcome them.

LITTLE BY LITTLE.

“ Little by little,” the tempter said,
As a dark and cunning snare he laid,
For the young unwary feet ;
“ Little by little, and day by day,
I will tempt the careless soul away,
Into the broad and flowery way,
Till the ruin is made complete.”

“ Little by little,”—sure and slow,
We fashion our future of bliss or woe,
As the present passes away ;
Our feet are climbing the stairway bright,
Up to the region of endless light,
Or gliding downward into the night,
“ Little by little,” and day by day.

September 19.

And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any one; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.—MARK xi. 25.

WHEN you are pained by an unkind word or deed, ask yourself if *you* have not spoken or done the same, many times.

Pray for whom thou lovest.

FORGIVING.

When thou art kneeling down at night,
Beside thy mother's knee to pray,
And thinking over all thy sins
Done, through the busy day;
Then call to mind thy brother's wrong,
To strife by angry passions driven,
And in thy heart forgive him all,
As thou wouldest be forgiven.

Go, throw thy little arms around
His neck, and kiss him tenderly,
Nor turn away with pouting lip,
And sullen, tearful eye.
Thou hast sinned more against thy God
Than ever brother did to thee ;
If He should turn away His face,
How wretched wouldest thou be !

Dost thou remember when thy Lord
Hung on His cruel cross so long,
How in His agony He prayed
For those who did Him wrong ?
They nailed His hands, they pierced His feet,—
Their angry hearts no pity knew ;
"Father, forgive them," was His cry,
"They know not what they do."

Go, seek thy little brother's side,
And press to his thy rosy cheek,
And whisper the forgiveness free
He is too proud to seek.
Then, as the brightest ray from heaven
Doth on the glittering dewdrop fall,
Thy penitence shall be received,
And God forgive thee all.

CECIL FRANCES ALEXANDER.

September 20.

*My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.—
PROV. i. 10.*

WHEN you are pressed to do anything wrong, have the boldness to say, No. A very wise man has said that any one who has learned to say *No* has made the first step to being a good, useful, great man. Do not care how many there may be against you ; do not think of the trouble of doing right ; do it, and take the consequences.

“NO.”

Yesterday, out of my window
I leaned, and chanced to hear
Two boys, as they plotted mischief,
Not thinking I was near.
“ We must have Joe to help us,”
One of the plotters said ;
“ He’s as good as a dozen for helping,
Whenever there’s fun ahead.”

As they stood there, talking together,
About the work to be done,
If they carried out the mischief,
They called by the name of “fun,”—
Up the street we heard a whistle
And knew that Joe was nigh
By the sound of his merry music,
Like the blackbirds in the rye.

“ We’ve just been talking about you ! ”
The boys cried out to Joe ;
“ We’ve planned the jolliest frolic,
And we count on you, you know.”
“ It depends on what’s to be done, boys,
As to whether I help,” said he ;
“ If it’s fun, and *only* fun, you know
You can always count on me.”

They told him what their plans were ;
He gravely shook his head,—
“ I couldn’t help with that, boys,
For it wouldn’t be right,” he said ;
“ Perhaps you call it only fun,
But you know it isn’t so ; ”
And though they urged, they urged in vain,
For he firmly answered, “ No ! ”

I was proud of the boy, with courage
To stand up for the right ;
He was as much a hero
As those who battles fight.
Whenever a boy is tempted,
As was my hero, Joe,
It’s always best to win the day
By a firm, unwavering “ No ! ”

EBEN E. REXFORD.

September 21.

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.—MATT. v. 48.

“I USED to say to my own two boys: ‘You are like the block of marble which is to be made into a statue. You, yourselves, are the sculptors. It depends upon you, whether you chisel it into a figure which is beautiful and noble, or one that is distorted and base. Every ungenerous act, every hurtful word, every unmanly thought, is a false stroke of the chisel, and mars the statue.’ ”

FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT.

LIFE SCULPTURE.

Chisel in hand stood a sculptor-boy
With his marble block before him,
And his face lit up with a smile of joy,
As an angel-dream passed o'er him.
He carved the dream on that shapeless stone,
With many a sharp incision ;
With heaven's own light the sculpture shone,—
He had caught that angel-vision !

Sculptors of life are we, as we stand,
With our souls uncarved before us ;
Waiting the hour, when, at God's command,
Our life-dream shall pass o'er us ;
If we carve it then, on the yielding stone,
With many a sharp incision,
Its heavenly beauty shall be our own,—
Our lives,—that angel-vision.

GEORGE W. DOANE.

September 22.

As for God, His way is perfect.—2 SAM. xxii. 31.

FIDELITY in trifles and an earnest seeking to please God in little matters, is a test of real devotion and love. Let your aim be to please our dear Lord perfectly in little things.

JEAN NICOLAUS GROU.

THE LITTLE SEED-CELLS.

How neatly all the seeds are laid
Within the ripening pod !
How carefully the cells are made !
This is the work of God.

The lining is not harsh or rough,
But soft and polished well ;
Each little seed has room enough
Within its tiny cell.

How carefully the sides are closed
Against the wind and rain ;
For if He left the seeds exposed,
They would not grow again.

There's no disorder anywhere
In what my Father does ;
He condescends to make with care
The smallest flower that grows.

So children, who would learn from Him,
Neat habits seek to gain,
Or they will waste much precious time,
And do their work in vain.

September 23.

He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand ; but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.—PROV. x. 4.

NEVER leave that till to-morrow which you can do to-day.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Acts pass into habits. We become what we do.

DEAN FARRAR.

GRANDMOTHER'S STITCHES.

What had happened to Emily Foote?
Every button was gone from her boot!
She noticed that morning that one was loose,—
"I'll fix it at bedtime!" Ah, little the use!
"Remember my stitches," grandmother said,
As she kindly nodded her dear, wise head.

"A 'corner rent' in my dress,—that's all!"
And Mary ran for her cap and shawl;
"I'll mend it soon—now, there isn't time!"
How she wished she'd heeded her grandmother's
rhyme!
The rent grew long and ever so wide,
And kept her at home from the picnic ride.

Teddy was playing with ball and bat,—
"I've started a stitch!" "O never mind that!"
Answered his chum, jolly Archibald May,—
"Twill last as long as we want to play!"
"But grandmother says,"—"O bother such things!"
So, soon the ball was but leather and strings.

And grandmother's stitches,—yours and mine,—
"A stitch in time, my dear, saves nine."

A. F. CALDWELL.

September 24.

*For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning,
that we should love one another.—I JOHN iii. 11.*

"I AM sure it is always right to love,—to love as much, as dearly, as long, as deeply as we can. Always right to love, never to despise or keep aloof, or turn aside. Roger and I have looked well all through the gospels to see. And the Pharisees despised, the priest and the Levite passed by, and the disciples said once or twice, 'Send her away.' But the Lord drew near, called them to Him, touched, took in His arms, loved,—*always loved*; loved when they were wandering, loved when they would not come; loved even when they went away."

ELIZABETH CHARLES.

From "The Draytons and Davenants."

LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

It was Saturday night, and two children small
Sat on the stairs in the lighted hall,
Vexed and troubled, and sore perplexed
To learn for Sunday their Bible text.
Only three words on a gilded card,
But both the children declared it hard.

“‘Love’—that is easy,—it means,—why, this,—
(A warm embrace and a loving kiss)
“But ‘one another,’ I don’t see who
Is meant by ‘another’—now May, do you?”

Very grandly she raised her head,
Our thoughtful darling, and slowly said,
As she fondly smiled on the little brother,—
“Why, I am but one, and you are another,
And this is the meaning,—don’t you see?
That *I* must love you, and *you* must love me.”

Wise, little preacher, could any sage
Interpret better the sacred page?

September 25.

This is My commandment, That ye love one another as I have loved you.—JOHN xv. 12.

LET home-love be Christ-love,—the kind that never faileth. Wherever else, far or near, you pour the bright beams of love, be sure you brighten your own dear home. No goodness and gentleness outside will atone for unlovingness inside the precious circle of home.

THE CHILD’S FIRST GRIEF.

“Oh, call my brother back to me!
I cannot play alone;
The summer comes, with flower and bee,—
Where is my brother gone?

“ The butterfly is glancing bright
Across the sunbeam’s track ;
I care not now to chase its flight,—
Oh, call my brother back !

“ The flowers run wild,—the flowers we sowed
Around our garden tree ;
Our vine is drooping with its load,—
Oh, call him back to me ! ”

“ He would not hear my voice, fair child ;
He may not come to thee ;
The face that once like spring-time smiled,
On earth no more thou’lt see.

“ A rose’s brief, bright life of joy,—
Such unto him was given ;
Go,—thou must play alone, my boy,
Thy brother is in heaven.”

“ And has he left his birds and flowers,
And must I call in vain ?
And through the long, long summer hours,
Will he not come again ?

“ And by the brook and in the glade
Are all our wanderings o’er ?
Oh, while my brother with me played,
Would I had loved him more ! ”

FELICIA D. HEMANS.

September 26.

For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.—Psa. xci. 11.

WHAT cares the child when the mother rocks it, though all storms beat without ? So we, if God doth shield and tend us, shall be heedless of the tempests and blasts of life, blow they never so rudely.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

WHO WILL TAKE CARE OF ME?

"Who will take care of me?"—darling, you say!
Lovingly, tenderly watched as you are!
Listen! I give you the answer to-day,—
One who is never forgetful or far.

He will take care of you! All through the day
Jesus is near you to keep you from ill;
Walking or resting, at lessons or play,
Jesus is with you, and watching you still.

He will take care of you! All through the night,
Jesus, the Shepherd, His little one keeps;
Darkness to Him is the same as the light;
He never slumbers, and He never sleeps.

He will take care of you! All through the year,
Crowning each day with His kindness and love;
Sending you blessing, and shielding from fear,
Leading you on to the bright home above.

He will take care of you! yes, to the end!
Nothing can alter His love to His own;
Darling, be glad that you have such a Friend,
He will not leave you one moment alone!

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

September 27.

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.—JOHN viii. 12.

THE closer we keep in loving companionship with Jesus, day by day, the more surely we shall know just what is right and what is wrong. Love tells us, and, the stronger the love, the more sensitive we are to its whispers.

THE CHILDREN'S FRIEND.

If the Master came this way,
 Gently smiling at our play,
 Tender toward our little trials,
 Cherishing our self-denials ;
 Could we bear to keep away
 If we heard the Master say,—
 "Come and walk with Me, to-day"?

Where He walks, the lilies shine ;
 There the clusters of the vine
 In the mellow air are sunning,
 And Siloa's rill is running.
 Hark ! that loving call divine :—
 "Lay thy little hand in Mine,
 All this goodly land is thine."

MARY J. JACQUES.

September 28.

The Lord will receive my prayer.—Psa. vi. 9.

Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.—JOHN xiii. 23.

WE may be as near to Him at all times,—and, more than all, when we kneel down to pray, as the beloved disciple was, when he laid his head upon His breast.

FREDERICK W. FARRAR.

CHRIST'S LOVE.

See the kind Shepherd, Jesus, stands,
 With all engaging charms ;
 Hark, how He calls the tender lambs,
 And folds them in His arms !

" Permit them to approach," He cries ;
 " Nor scorn their humble name : "
 For 'twas to bless such souls as these
 The Lord of angels came.

He'll lead us to the heavenly streams
Where living waters flow ;
And guide us to the fruitful fields
Where trees of knowledge grow.

The feeblest lamb amidst the flock
Shall be its Shepherd's care ;
While folded in the Saviour's arms,
We're safe from every snare.

PHILIP DODDRIDGE.

September 29.

Thou art fairer than the children of men.—Psa. xlv. 2.

Yea, He is altogether lovely.—SONG OF SOL. V. 16.

THE Bible speaks of the “beauty of the Lord.” He is so full of love that it must have shone in His face, when He lived on earth, so that the children were glad to nestle in His arms. In Heaven, we shall find His face the most beautiful face we ever looked upon.

STORY OF A PICTURE.

Years ago, there lived a painter
Who had striven long to set
On the canvas, one sweet vision
That his soul could not forget.
'Twas the face of the Lord Jesus,
That he wrought at, day by day ;
Till, at last, with reverent touches
All the work, completed lay.

O'er the rapture of the moment
Swept a doubt. Would any know
Whose the likeness in the picture,—
Whose the face he fain would show ?

* * * *

One dear, precious, little daughter
To this father had been given,—
Left to soothe his blinding sorrow
When her mamma went to Heaven.

He had told her but that evening,

Just before she went to rest,

How our Lord rebuked disciples,

But the little children blessed ;

How *He* loved her more than papa

More than mamma, up in Heaven ;

And she wept for what He suffered

That our sins might be forgiven,—

Smiled again when papa told her

'Twas because He loved her so.

If the pictured face were like Him,

Would not *she* be sure to know ?

Just across the threshold yonder

Lay his birdling in her nest,

There he set the picture, standing

Where the light would show it best,—

Stood a moment by his darling,

Smiling in a happy dream,

Then withdrew,—while fitful slumbers

Fled at last, with morning's gleam.

From the wall, beside her pillow,

Mamma's face smiles, fair and sweet ;

Morn by morn its gaze so tender

First her baby-eyes to greet.

Now she spies another picture

And her blue eyes open wide :

"Morning, papa ! come to Daisy !

Just look, papa ! look ! " she cried.

"Jesus knew about it, papa ;

He did know, I want to see !

O, how kind He is to Daisy !

Sent His picture down to me !"

Then the painter's soul was joyful,—

Courage nerved his arm anew,—

He had fixed upon the canvas

All his vision, fair and true.

September 30.

And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw Him (Jesus), he fell at His feet, and besought Him greatly,

saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death; I pray Thee come and lay Thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live. And Jesus went with him. And He took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi.—MARK v. 22, 23, 41.

HE touched the hand of the child, as she lay on her couch, in the sleep of death. He addressed her in words which have been handed down literally. They are Syriac words: “Talitha cumi,” that is, “My little lamb, my little pet lamb, rise up.” . . . And she came again to life, and was to them as before. And you, children, these words are also addressed to you. “My little lamb,”—the very word tells to you how precious you are to the Good Shepherd. Arise, get up, stir yourself! get up from any slothful habit, from any idle, selfish habit you have formed. Let His voice reach your innermost heart, and raise you from the deepest sleep. . . . He says to each one of us: “Talitha cumi,”—My little lamb, rise, mount up, be better this year than you were last year. Mount up, become better and wiser; mount up, rise up, as if you were climbing a long ladder, or a high mountain.

DEAN STANLEY.

LIFE IS A LADDER.

A ladder, life is called,
To climb up, round by round;
And higher, higher, we should step
Each day, above the ground.

Each noble deed we do,
Each kindly word we say,
Each trouble we pass through,
Is a step upon the way.

October 1.

Doth His promise fail forevermore?—Psa. lxxvii. 8.

WHAT multitudes of leaves and flowers fall to the

ground every year and decay! What a waste, as it seems, of beautiful things! But are they really wasted? Oh, no! God can make again, out of these decayed leaves and flowers, other leaves and flowers just as beautiful as these once were. How wonderful this is! Look out in summer, and see on trees, and shrubs, and plants, flowers of every color mingled with the green leaves. What a world of varied beauty you behold! You cannot believe that all this will soon be gone. But wait a little, and there are no leaves nor flowers. The leaves and flowers have fallen, in all their beauty, and the snow covers them. Is it possible that all this beauty that we have seen thus buried, can be revived again? Will the green grass again appear? Will these bare trees and shrubs again be covered with leaves and blossoms, and will the flowers again spring up? Oh, yes! We have seen God do all this, year after year, with the sunshine, and the rain, and the dew of spring; and He will do it again, for He has said that "seed-time and harvest shall not cease."

WORTHINGTON HOOKER.

GLAD AUTUMN DAYS.

The magic voice of spring is gone ;
Her emerald blades are turning brown ;
The dandelion ball of lace
Has given place to thistle-down.
The violets, that caught the dew
To hide beneath their bonnets blue,
And orchard-blossoms, pure and sweet,
Have long since withered in the heat.

The sickle, sharp and keen, has reaped
The meadow-flowers, rows on rows ;
The barley lies, in winnowed heaps,
And aftermath luxuriant grows ;
The sumacs tall, all touched with change,
Form crimson hedge, around the grange,
And, floating now, my path across,
On gauzy wings, is milkweed's floss.

October 2.

Consider the ravens : for they neither sow nor reap : which neither have storehouse nor barn ; and God feedeth them : how much more are ye better than the fowls ?—LUKE xii. 24.

AN Englishman was once coming down the river Nile, in Egypt, on a large boat loaded with grain, and the birds came from every village and ate the grain piled on the deck. The Englishman asked the Egyptian captain of the boat : “Who owns this grain ?” “I own it,” said he. Then the Englishman asked why he let the birds eat up the grain. The Egyptian asked the Englishman : “Who made the birds ?” The Englishman answered, “God.” The Egyptian asked whether grain was a food which God intended birds to eat. The Englishman said it was. The Egyptian said : “Can the birds sow and raise the grain for themselves ?” The Englishman said : “They cannot.” Then said the Egyptian, “Let them eat ; God has provided enough for both them and us.”

Our Dumb Animals.

THE LARK'S SONG.

“ Lark, high up in the summer sky,
Singing so blithe and bold,
Don't you know that winter is coming,—
Coming with frost and cold ?

“ The swallows are gone,—sweet summer birds,—
Over the sea away,
And the crimson flush of the forests tells
Of fading and decay.

“ No bird sings save the robin and you ;
His voice is plaintive and sad ;
Then, sky-lark, why do *you* carol on
Singing, ‘ Be glad ! be glad ’ ? ”

“ Yes, I know that winter is coming,”
The lark in answer, said ;

“ But it came last year, and never once
Did I fail in my daily bread.

“ Why should I mope, when the autumn sun
Is ripening the autumn seeds?
A bounteous store, which will surely prove
Enough for the winter’s needs.”

“ Lark, you are right. There’s an unseen Hand,
Providing for bird and beast,
And a Friend who for His creatures cares,
Nor overlooks the least.

“ And I know that along the blackberry hedge,
And over each wild-rose stem,
So bright with berries, so free to all,
Is written, ‘ God feedeth them.’ ”

October 3.

The whole earth is at rest and is quiet.—ISA. xiv. 7.

THE spring was over with its songs and nest-buildings,—the summer with its power of ripening sunshine,—the harvest with its anxieties and its merry-makings. The sun had nothing more to do but to smile, from his depths of golden light, on his finished sheaves and ripened fruit. The earth, too, had done her work for the year, and was couching at rest and quiet, like the patient oxen in the streak of golden sunshine, at the top of the field, opposite my window.

There was a ripe calm, and a sacred stillness over everything, which made me feel as if I knew what the Bible meant by the “ shadow of the wings ” of God. For, where shadow and God are spoken of together, shadow cannot mean shade and darkness, but only shelter, and safety, and repose. It seemed as if the whole earth were nestling under great, warm, motherly wings.

SCYTHE SONG.

Mowers, weary, and brown, and blithe,
What is the word methinks ye know,—
Endless over-word, that the scythe
Sings to the blades of grass below?

Scythes that swing in the grass and clover,
Something still they say as they pass ;
What is the word, that, over and over,
Sings the scythe to the flowers and grass ?

“ *Hush, ah hush!*” the scythes are saying,
“ *Hush, and heed not, and fall asleep;*”
“ *Hush!*” they say to the grasses swaying ;
“ *Hush!*” they sing, to the clover deep ;
“ *Hush!*”—’tis the lullaby Time is singing,
“ *Hush! and heed not, for all things pass;*”
Hush, ah hush!”—and the scythes are swinging
Over the clover,—over the grass.

ANDREW LANG.

October 4.

And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.—GEN. i. 12.

WERE we wise enough to understand God’s works, we should find that there is nothing,—from the cold stone in the earth or the most common weed by the wayside, to the minutest creature that breathes,—which may not in some way or other, minister to the happiness of some living creature.

WHAT THE BURDOCK WAS GOOD FOR.

“ Good for nothing,” the farmer said,
As he made a sweep at the burdock’s head ;
But then he thought it was best, no doubt,
To come some day, and root it out,
So he lowered his scythe, and went his way
To see his corn, to gather his hay ;
And the weed grew safe, and strong, and tall,
Close by the side of the garden wall.

“ Good for a home,” cried the little toad,
As he hopped up out of the dusty road ;
He had just been having a dreadful fright,—
The boy who gave it was just in sight ;

Here it was cool, and dark, and green,
The safest kind of a leafy screen;
The toad was happy ; "for," said he,
"The burdock was plainly made for me."

"Good for a prop," the spider thought ;
And to and fro with care he wrought,
Till he fastened it well to an evergreen,
And spun his cables fine between.
'Twas a beautiful bridge,—a triumph of skill ;
The flies came 'round, as idlers will ;
The spider lurked in his corner dim,—
The more that came, the better for him.

"Good for play," said a child, perplexed
To know what frolic was coming next ;
So she gathered the burrs that all despised,
And her city playmate was quite surprised
To see what a beautiful basket or chair
Could be made with a little time and care ;
They ranged their treasures about with pride,
And played all day by the burdock's side.

Nothing is lost in this world of ours ;
Honey comes from the idle flowers ;
The weed which we pass in utter scorn
May save a life by another morn.
Wonders await us at every turn,—
We must be silent, and gladly learn
No room for recklessness or abuse,
Since even a burdock has its use.

October 5.

*Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor,
and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all
malice.*—EPH. iv. 31.

"I FORGET a great many things which happened last year," said a little girl, with tears running down her cheeks ; "but I can't forget the angry words I spoke to my dear sister, who is now dead."

Dear children, let your prayer be : "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth ; keep the door of my lips."

QUESTIONS.

Can you put the spider's web back in place
That once has been swept away?
Can you put the apple again on the bough
Which fell at our feet to-day?
Can you put the lily-cup back on the stem,
And cause it to live and grow?
Can you mend the butterfly's broken wing
That you crushed with a hasty blow?
Can you put the bloom again on the grape,
And the grape again on the vine?
Can you put the dewdrops back on the flowers,
And make them sparkle and shine?
Can you put the petals back on the rose?
If you could, would it smell as sweet?
Can you put the flower again on the husk,
And show me the ripened wheat?
Can you put the kernel back in the nut,
Or the broken egg in the shell?
Can you put the honey back in the comb,
And cover with wax each cell?
Can you put the perfume back in the vase
When once it has sped away?
Can you put the corn-silk back on the corn,
Or down on the catkins?—say!
You think my questions are trifling, dear;
Let me ask another one:
Can a hasty word ever be unsaid,
Or a deed unkind undone?

KATE LAWRENCE.

October 6.

*She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue
is the law of kindness.*—PROV. xxxi. 26.

SPEAK kindly in the morning; it lightens the cares of the day. Speak kindly at night; perchance before dawn some loved one may finish his space of life for this world, and it will be too late to ask forgiveness for unkind words.

SPEAK GENTLY.

Speak gently ! It is better far
To rule by love than fear,—
Speak gently,—let not harsh words mar
The good we might do here.

* * * * *

Speak gently to the aged one ;
Grieve not the care-worn heart,—
The sands of life are nearly run,
Let such in peace depart.

Speak gently, kindly to the poor,—
Let no harsh tone be heard ;
They have enough they must endure
Without an unkind word.

Speak gently to the erring,—know
They must have toiled in vain ;
Perchance unkindness made them so,—
O win them back again !

Speak gently ! He who gave His life
To bend man's stubborn will,
When elements were in fierce strife,
Said to them : " Peace, be still ! "

Speak gently ! 'Tis a little thing
Dropped in the heart's deep well ;
The good, the joy, which it may bring,
Eternity shall tell.

DAVID BATES.

October 7.

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.—GAL. vi. 2.

MAKE a rule, and pray God to help you to keep it, never, if possible, to lie down at night, without being able to say, "I have made one human being, at least, a little wiser, a little happier, or a little better this day." You will find it easier than you think, and pleasanter.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

WELL SPENT.

If you sit down at set of sun
And count the acts that you have done,
And, counting, find
One self-denying deed, one word
That eased the heart of him who heard,—
One glance most kind,
That fell like sunshine where it went,—
Then you may count that day well spent.

But if, through all the livelong day,
You've cheered no heart, by yea or nay,—
If, through it all
You've nothing done that you can trace
That brought the sunshine to one face,—
No act most small
That helped some soul and nothing cost,—
Then count that day as worse than lost.

GEORGE ELIOT.

October 8.

Put on . . . kindness.—COL. iii. 12.

THE kind word spoken in His service, the cup of cold water given in His name,—these are possible to the poorest, and kings can give no more.

FREDERICK W. FARRAR.

My experience of life makes me sure of one truth, which I do not try to explain ; that the sweetest happiness we ever know, comes not from love, but from sacrifice,—from the effort to make others happy. This is as true to me, as that my flesh will burn if I touch red hot metal.

JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY.

WHAT IS THE REAL GOOD?

“ What is the real good ? ”
I asked, in musing mood ;
“ Order,” said the law-court ;
“ Knowledge,” said the school ;

“Truth,” said the wise man ;
 “Pleasure,” said the fool ;
 “Love,” said the maiden ;
 “Beauty,” said the page ;
 “Freedom,” said the dreamer ;
 “Home,” said the sage ;
 “Fame,” said the soldier ;
 “Equity,”—the seer.

Spake my heart full sadly,—
 “The answer is not here.”

Then within my bosom
 Softly this I heard :—
 “Each heart holds the secret,—
 Kindness is the word !”

JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY.

October 9.

I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue : I will keep my mouth with a bridle.—PSA. XXXIX. 1.

IF thou would’st be like Jesus and do no wickedness, when anger is upon thee, thou must keep quiet and do nothing till thine anger is passed away, and then thou wilt be safe to speak and act wisely.

ROBERT BIRD.
From “The Carpenter of Nazareth.”

TIME ONLY FOR LOVE.

There’s a time for work and a time for play,
 A time for *everything good*, each day ;
 But never a time in this short life
 For quarrels, and angry words and strife.

M. A. L.

October 10.

Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister ; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.—MATT. xx. 26, 27.

How God rejoices over a soul, which does that upon earth which the angels do in Heaven !

G. TERSTEEGEN.

HOW TO BE AN ANGEL.

"I want to be an angel,"—
This was the song I heard :
It was a child that sang it,
Clear voiced as any bird.
And then a thought came ringing
To me, which I will tell,
How children may be angels
While here with us they dwell.

I know them when I see them,
Although they have no wings ;
Their words are full of sweetness,
As when a cherub sings.
Their ways are very gentle,
Their hearts are very kind,
They make the household happy,
To deeds of love inclined.

When mother's hands are weary,
They give her ready aid ;
They have a kiss for father,
When cares his brow o'er shade.
The baby knows their voices,
And ceases its low cry,
As if an angel smiling
Were standing sweetly by.

They kneel at night and morning,
And fold, in prayer, their hands ;
The Lord, our Father, hears them,—
And, when His word commands,
They haste in love to do it,
And thus, from day to day,
They grow to be like angels,
As they for blessings pray.

Angels at home, in duty,
Angels upon the street,
Dear human children, trying
The best they know, to meet

The trials and the crosses
Which boys and girls must know,
Who, as they follow Jesus,
Will like the angels grow.

Dear children, you may sing it,—
The little song I heard ;
We want the angels with us
In deed, and song, and word ;
In weeping, and in laughter,
In weary work or play,—
This is the place for angels,—
Dear angels every day.

Then go, with eyes of beauty,
And go, with hearts of love ;
But look away to Jesus,
Look to His throne above ;
Be angels here, I pray you,
With hands, and lips, and eyes,
Till in your home forever
You take an angel's prize.

October 11.

In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.—PHIL. ii. 3.

“MOTHER is always trying to make us love our neighbors as ourselves. She does so despise us for greediness or grudging, or snatching, or not sharing what we have got, or taking the best and leaving the rest, or helping ourselves first, or pushing forward, or praising ‘Number One,’ or being ‘dogs in the manger,’ or anything selfish. And we cannot bear her to despise us! *We* despise being selfish too; but very often we forget. Besides, it is sometimes rather difficult to love your neighbor as yourself when you want a thing very much.”

JULIANA HORATIA EWING.
From “Mary’s Meadow.”

NUMBER ONE.

“ I tell you,”—said Robbie, eating his peach,
And giving his sister none,

“ I believe in the good old saying, that each
Should look out for ‘ Number One ! ’ ”

“ Why, yes,” answered Katie,—wise little *elf*,—

“ But the counting should be begun
With the *other one*, instead of *yourself*,
And *he* should be Number One ! ”

CHARLES R. TALBOT.

October 12.

Thou, God, seest me.—GEN. xvi. 13.

A FATHER’s kind eye is upon me in love, and sweet
peace sheds happiness in my heart if I have done well.
O that I could always do well ! that I could always
come to my rest with an approving conscience ! but many
times I am tempted to do wrong things, to indulge
wrong thoughts. Father in heaven, forgive the sins and
faults of this day, and help me to live as I should wish
I had done, were I to die this night.

Matins and Vespers.

HYMN.

From the sunny morning
To the starry night,
Every look and motion
Meets our Father’s sight.

From our earliest breathing
To our latest year,
Every sound we utter
Meets our Father’s ear.

Through our earthly journey
Wheresoe’er we go,
Every thought and feeling
Doth our Father know.

Let us then be careful
That our looks shall be
Brave and kind and cheerful,
For our Lord to see.

Let us guard each accent
With a holier fear,—
Fit our every saying
For our Lord to hear.

Let no thought within us,
Hidden or confessed,
Ever bring a sorrow
To our dear Lord's breast.

Help us, O our Father !
Hear our earnest plea,—
Teach Thy little children
How to live for Thee !

October 13.

Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one ; and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are laborers together with God.—I COR. iii. 8, 9.

I PLUCK an acorn from the greensward and hold it to my ear ; and this is what it says to me : “ By and by the birds will come and nest in me. By and by I will furnish shade for the cattle. By and by I will provide warmth for the home, in the pleasant fire. By and by I will be shelter from the storm to those who have gone under the roof. By and by I will be the strong ribs of the great vessel, and the tempest will beat against me in vain, while I carry men across the Atlantic.” “ O, foolish little acorn, wilt thou be all this ? ” I ask. And the acorn answered, “ Yes,—God and I.”

LYMAN ABBOTT.

PLANTING THE TREE.

What do we plant, when we plant the tree?
We plant the ship, which will cross the sea ;
We plant the mast to carry the sails,
We plant the plank to withstand the gales ;
The keel, and keelson, and beam and knee,—
We plant the ship, when we plant the tree.

What do we plant, when we plant the tree ?
We plant the houses for you and me ;
We plant the rafters, the shingles, the floors,
We plant the studding, the lath, the doors,
The beams and siding,—all parts that be,—
We plant the house when we plant the tree.

What do we plant when we plant the tree ?
A thousand things that we daily see ;
We plant the spire that out-towers the crag,
We plant the staff for our country's flag,
We plant the shade, from the hot sun free,—
We plant all these when we plant the tree.

HENRY ABBEY.

October 14.

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever.—PSA. cvii. 1.

EVERYTHING around us speaks of the mighty power, the love and goodness of God, if we will only open our ears to hear, and our eyes to see ; the bright and glorious sun, made to give us light and warmth, which makes glad the hearts of joyous children who love to sport and play when he shines upon the earth ; the rain which comes to refresh the dry and dusty earth, which causes the little flowers to grow and bloom, and the fruits to ripen ; the gentle dew which falls so silently in the night ; the moon and twinkling stars ; all come from God's kind Hand, and this morning let me think again of my blessings and duties, and of what I owe to my constant Benefactor, God. Let me keep my heart right towards Him this day, and He will bless me.

Matins and Vespers.

AUTUMN.

Here's autumn, with her horn of plenty,—
Just see the fruits and grain!
Who was it brought them? Two kind friends,
The Sunshine and the Rain.

And Autumn, lifting high her horn
Now lets the good things fall;
Some into every home she sends,—
A bit of joy for all.

And for the home, with friends to love,
For clothes, for health, for grain,
We thank our Father,—Him who sends
The sunshine and the rain.

October 15.

Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice; for the Lord will do great things.—**JOEL ii. 21.**

OCTOBER! when all is changing and dying! when trees shed their leaves, when creepers crimson, when summer singers desert our woods, when flowers grow scanty in field and hedge-row! What promise, then, of spring? Yet look a little closer! Look at the knobs which line the wand-like stems and boughs of the willows,—do you know what they are? Yes, leaves for next spring, ready-made, in advance, and curled up, awaiting the summer. If you unfold them carefully, with a needle, and look at them closely, you will find each little leaf is fully formed. The spring has, even now, begun by anticipation. . . . Winter is but a temporary sleep, during which the life already formed, and well on its way to flower and foliage, just holds its breath awhile, in expectation of warmer weather.

BARE BOUGHS AND BUDS.

“Alas, alas, how the north wind grieves!”
Said the black ash, tall,—“I am losing my leaves!”

And, "Well-a-day," sighed the elm-tree old,
"I stand in a rain of my falling gold!"

And "Oh," cried the maple, overhead,
"On the dark ground rustles my robe of red!"

The birch-tree shook in a yellow shower,
And glimmered more ghostly every hour;

While the silver poplar whispered loud,
As its shimmering leaves joined the flying crowd.

A sound of mourning filled all the land,
For the trees grew barer on either hand;

But the little buds laughed on the twigs so brown
That sprang from the branches up and down,

As, tucked in safe, and glad, and warm,
Ready to weather the winter storm,

They waited so patiently and still
Till the wild, cold wind should have worked its will,

And blown the sad skies once more clear,
And wakened from slumber the sweet New Year.

If you look, my child, at the tree-top high,
You'll see them clustered against the sky,

The little brown buds that rock and swing,
Dreaming all winter of coming spring!

And if, when April comes again
You watch through the veil of her balmy rain,

You'll see them pushing out leaves, like wings,
All crowned with the beauty that patience brings!

CELIA THAXTER.

October 16.

Be of good cheer.—ACTS xxiii. 11.

WE dig, we toil, we fret, and all the while, close over us, bends the infinite wonder and beauty of Nature, saying,—“Look up, my child! feel my smile, and be glad!”

GEORGE S. MERRIAM.

EVER A SONG SOMEWHERE.

There is ever a song somewhere, my dear,
There is ever a something sings away;
There's the song of the lark when the sky is clear,
And the song of the thrush when the sky is gray.

The sunshine showers across the grain,
And the bluebird thrills in the orchard tree;
And in and out, when the eaves drip rain,
The swallows are twittering ceaselessly.

There is ever a song somewhere, my dear,
In the midnight black, or the midday blue;
The robin pipes when the sun is here
And the cricket chirrups the whole night through.

The buds may blow, and the fruits may grow,
And the autumn leaves drop crisp and sere;
But, whether the sun, or the rain, or the snow,
There's ever a song somewhere, my dear.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

October 17.

O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good.—PSA. cxviii. 1.

MAY we, who are so young speak to Him who always was? May we, who can hardly speak plain, speak to God?

We, who are so young, are but lately made alive; therefore we should not forget His forming hand which hath made us alive. We, who cannot speak plain, should lisp out praises to Him who teacheth us how to speak, and hath opened our dumb lips. When we could not think of Him, He thought of us; before we could ask Him to bless us, He had already given us many blessings. He fashioneth our tender limbs, and causeth them to grow; He maketh us strong and tall and nimble. Every day we are more active than the former day; therefore every day we ought to praise Him better than the former day.

ANNA LÆTITIA BARBAULD.

WE THANK THEE.

Can a little child like me
Thank the Father fittingly?
Yes, oh, yes! Be good and true,
Patient, kind in all you do;
Love the Lord, and do your part,
Learn to say, with all your heart,
"Father in Heaven, we thank Thee!"

For the fruit upon the tree,
For the birds that sing of Thee,
For the earth in beauty dressed,
Father, mother, and the rest,
For Thy precious, loving care,
For Thy bounty everywhere,—
"Father in Heaven, we thank Thee!"

MARY MAPES DODGE.

October 18.

The works of the Lord are great,—sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.—Psa. cxi. 2.

As a countenance is made beautiful by the soul's shining through it, so the world is beautiful by the shining through it of a God.

JOHANN GEORG JACOBI.

GOD IN EVERYTHING.

God hath a presence, and that you may see
In the fold of the flower, the leaf of the tree ;

In the sun of the noonday, the star of the night ;
In the storm-cloud of darkness, the rainbow of light ;

In the waves of the ocean, the furrows of land ;
In the mountain of granite, the atom of sand ;

Turn where ye may, from the sky to the sod,—
Where can ye gaze that ye see not a God ?

ELIZA COOK.

October 19.

Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

—MATT. xix. 14.

“MOTHER,” said a little child, “how old must I be, before I can be a Christian?” And the wise mother answered, “How old must you be, darling, before you love me?” “Why, mother, I *always* loved you,—I do now, and always shall.” “How old must you be before you can trust yourself wholly to me and my care?” said her mother. “I always did,” she answered.

The mother asked again, “How old will you have to be before you do what I want you to do?” Then the child whispered, half guessing what her mother meant,—“I can, *now*, without growing any older.” Then the mother said, “You can be a Christian *now*, my darling, without waiting to be older. All you have to do is to love, and trust, and try to please the One who says, ‘Let the little ones come unto Me.’”

ONLY A LITTLE CHILD.

Only a little child !

Yet, Lord, Thou callest me :

Therefore, confidingly,

I come to Thee !

Only a little child !
And though I sinful be,
Thou, Lord, forgivest me ;
I come to Thee !

Only a little child !
Looking up, loving Thee
Because Thou lovest me,
I come to Thee !

Only a little child !
Brightly and cheerfully,
Swiftly, obediently,
I come to Thee !

October 20.

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children ; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us and hath given Himself for us.—EPH. v. 1, 2.

THERE is a little plant away on the prairies of Texas, which always, whatever the weather may be, in rain, frost or sunshine, turns its flower towards the north. This makes it a sure guide for the traveler, and gives it its name,—compass-flower,—from its resemblance to the compass, which always points towards the north pole. God's Word, which He has given to us, is a compass to guide us in our way ; and, if we read it and follow its leadings, we, even though we are only children, may be like the little compass-flower, and show others the way to God and heaven.

ONE LITTLE STAR.

One little star in the starry night,
One little beam in the noonday light,
One little drop in the river's might,—
What can it be ? oh, what can it do ?

One little flower in the flower-full spring,
One little feather in one little wing,
One little note when the many birds sing,—
All are so little, feeble and few !

Each little star has its special ray,
Each little beam has its place in the day,
Each little river-drop impulse and way ;
Feather and flower and songlet help too.

Each little child can some love-work find,
Each little hand and each little mind ;
All can be gentle, and useful, and kind,
Tho' they are little like me and like you.

SUSAN COOLIDGE.

October 21.

How excellent (precious) is Thy loving kindness, O God ! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings.—Psa. xxxvi. 7.

“UNDER His wings shalt thou *trust!*” Not shalt thou *see!* If a little eaglet wanted to see for itself what was going on, and thought it could take care of itself for a little while, and hopped from under the shadow of the wings, it would be neither safe nor warm. The sharp wind could chill it, and the cruel hand might seize it then. So you are to trust,—rest quietly and peacefully “under His wings”; stay there,—not be peeping out and wondering whether God is really taking care of you! You may be always safe and happy there; safe,—for “in the shadow of Thy wings will I take my refuge;” happy,—for “in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice.” Remember, too, that it is a command, as well as a promise; it is what you are to do to-day, all day long. “Under His wings shalt thou trust.”

At Dawn of Day.

TRUST IN GOD.

The child leans on its parent’s breast,
Leaves there its cares, and is at rest ;
The bird sits singing by his nest,
And tells aloud
His trust in God, and so is blest
'Neath every cloud.

He has no store, he sows no seed,
Yet sings aloud, and doth not heed ;
By flowing stream or grassy mead,
 He sings to shame
Men, who forget, in fear of need,
 A Father's name.

The heart that trusts, forever sings,
And feels as light as it had wings ;
A well of peace within it springs ;
 Come good or ill,
Whate'er to-day, to-morrow brings,
 It is His will.

ISAAC WILLIAMS.

October 22.

Flee as a bird to your mountain.—PSA. xi. 1.

I LOVE the service of my God ; like the bird, I fly at liberty on the wings of obedience to His holy will.

THOMAS CHALMERS.

THE BIRD.

The bird,¹ let loose in eastern skies,
 When hastening fondly home,
Ne'er stoops to earth her wing, nor flies
 Where idle warblers roam.
But high she shoots through air and light,
 Above all low delay,
Where nothing earthly bounds her flight,
 Nor shadow dims her way.

So grant me, God, from every care
 And stain of passion free,
Aloft, through virtue's purer air,
 To hold my course to Thee !
No sin to cloud, no lure to stay
 My soul, as home she springs ;—
Thy sunshine on her joyful way,
 Thy freedom in her wings !

THOMAS MOORE.

¹ The carrier-pigeon flies very high, that there may be no obstacle between her and the place to which she is going.

October 23.

And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so.—GEN. i. 11.

How much is contained within a small acorn cup ! When a child holds an acorn in his hand, he holds not a small nut only, but a forest ; for, folded within its tiny shell, lie trees, and their children-trees,—even a whole forest. How wonderful was the command of God ! “Let the earth bring forth . . . the tree yielding fruit, whose seed is in itself.” It is a miracle to make a tree ; but how much more wonderful a miracle to give to the tree the power of producing other trees, in long succession for countless years ! A watch is, perhaps, one of the most beautiful and wonderful things ever made by man, but what would you think of a watch, which, if put in the ground, could produce many more watches ? Does not this comparison show us how much greater *God’s* work is than man’s ?

HOW THE OAK GREW.

An acorn from the bough where it had hung
The breezy summer through,
And heard the songs the nestling robins sung,
And felt the dew,

Trembled when autumn winds blew chill around
Its erstwhile happy height,
And, letting go its hold, dropped to the ground
One frosty night.

The leaves were heaped to make a fitting bed,
And rustled, as it fell,
As if to say, “ Your winter couch is spread,
And all is well.”

There, under icy rain and drifted snow,
Through months of cold and storm,
Though all the winds of heaven might roar and blow,
It nestled warm.

And when spring came, with early bird and bee,
Two little leaves were seen
In mimic grandeur, like its old-time tree,
Outspreading green.

And so it grew, aspiring evermore
To reach as fine a height
As had the tiny acorn known before
That autumn night.

Not in a single summer did it gain
Stature, and girth, and strength,
Yet amplitude of bough and sturdy grain
Were reached at length.

And then in leafy majesty it stood,
With front that thunder-stroke
Could scarce abash,—the monarch of the wood,—
A full-grown oak.

CLARA DOTY BATES.

October 24.

While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.—GEN. viii. 22.

“HE hath made everything beautiful in his time,” said Solomon, the wise man. The fresh, young leaves, the bursting buds, the songs of bluebird and robin tell us spring-time is here, and, while we are rejoicing in all the beauty, summer blossoms fill the air with fragrance, and summer birds gladden us with music. Then, autumn comes and paints the leaves with scarlet and gold, and brings us juicy fruits, and “on the hill the golden-rod, and the aster in the wood,”

“When the sound of dropping nuts is heard, tho’ all the trees are still,
And twinkle in the smoky light the waters of the rill.”

Winter gives us the pure frost-crystals and the snow, and the glad Christmas-time. God, in His love for us, gives us ever-changing beauties, as if never weary of making us happy. Let us thank Him for His love.

THE SIGNS OF THE SEASONS.

What does it mean when the bluebird comes,
And builds its nest, singing sweet and clear?
When violets peep among blades of grass?
These are the signs that spring is here.

What does it mean when berries are ripe?
When butterflies flit and honey-bees hum?
When cattle stand under the shady trees?
These are the signs that summer has come.

What does it mean when the crickets chirp,
And away to the south the robins steer?
When apples are falling, and leaves grow brown?
These are the signs that autumn is here.

What does it mean when days are short?
When leaves are gone and brooks are dumb?
When fields are white with drifted snow?—
These are the signs that winter has come.

The old stars set, and the new ones rise,
The skies that were stormy grow bright and clear;
And so the beautiful, wonderful signs
Go round and round with the changing year.

October 25.

Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.—JOB xiv. 8, 9.

THE buds that you see in the spring do not begin in the spring. They are formed the year before, a little while before the leaves begin to fall, and, as they form, they loosen the leaves, and soon push them off. Now, in these little buds are locked up all the leaves and flowers that are to come out the next spring. The precious treasures of another year are in these buds. They must be kept safe, then, through all the cold winter. So they have tight coverings to guard them from the cold. These

coverings have been called the "winter-cradles" of the buds. The little buds in these cradles rock back and forth in the cold winds of winter, and are as secure from harm as the little baby in its cradle, in its nice warm home. The inside of these cradles is lined with a soft down. This is the bud's little blanket to keep it warm in its cradle. God protects the roots, too, under a snowy covering, till the beautiful spring comes, when they will do their part to make the leaves and the flowers, and the fruit.

WORTHINGTON HOOKER.

GOD'S WORK.

" Mother, where are the flowers gone ? "
Asked a bright-eyed little one,
Whose busy feet had roved the fields
From dawn to set of sun.

" I've wandered by the brook side,
And on the grassy hill,
I've sought in vain the violet,
Gold-rod and daffodil.

" The trees are turning yellow,
The milk-white bay-flowers fade ;
I can find no hawthorn blossoms
On hill, or in sunny glade."

" 'Tis God, my child, hath taken the flowers
To shield them from the blast ;
He bids them hide their tiny heads
Till winter's cold is past.

" In their cold dark beds, He cares for them,
And, when the spring-winds blow,
In beauty clothed, all fresh and new,
He'll bid the flowers grow.

" Now rest and sleep, my little child,
The God, whose wondrous power
Can give the blossoms life again,
Will keep my precious flower."

PERCY BROOKE.

October 26.

A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.—
PROV. xxix. 15.

ALL children love their mothers,—each thinking his own the best in the world, but do they remember that people are judging their mothers by what they see in them? “That boy has a good mother,” said one gentleman to another, on a street-car, the other day. “Who is she?” asked his friend. “I do not know who she is, nor what is his name, but any one can see what kind of a mother he has,” was the reply. “Did you notice how he raised his hat, and turned the address of the letter down, as he picked it up and returned it to the lady who dropped it? Did you hear him say ‘Please pardon me,’ politely to the laundry-woman, when he unintentionally stepped against the big basket she was carrying? As he came on the car, he did not jump on while it was in motion, to get a seat before those older people could get on. Did you see him pull down the curtain and shut out the view he would have liked, because that old gentleman seemed to find the strong sunlight disagreeable? These things are trifles, but they are silent witnesses to a mother’s training.”

MOTHER.

There are soft words murmured by dear, dear lips,
Far richer than any other:
But the sweetest word that the ear hath heard
Is the blessed name of “Mother.”

O magical word! may it never die
From the lips that love to speak it,
Nor melt away from the trusting hearts
That even would break to keep it.

Was there ever a name that lived like this?
Will there ever be such another?
The angels have reared in heaven a shrine
To the holy name of “Mother.”

October 27.

Thou openeth Thy hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.—PSA. cxlv. 16.

WHEN the season grows rough, all the birds draw nearer man. Robin Redbreast, attracted by the noise of the woodcutter's axe in the forest, hovers about him and sings his softest lays. Even the more timid birds venture near our doors, and with plaintive note seem to ask a bit of food. So the bird-loving Michelet tells us, and adds: "Open your windows, for pity's sake, and give them a few crumbs."

ROBIN REDBREAST.

Good-bye, good-bye to Summer !
For Summer's nearly done ;
The garden smiling faintly,
Cool breezes in the sun ;
Our thrushes now are silent,
Our swallows flown away,—
But Robin's here with coat of brown,
And ruddy breast-knot gay.
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin dear !
Robin sings so sweetly
In the falling of the year.

Bright yellow, red and orange,
The leaves come down in hosts ;
The trees are Indian princes,
But soon they'll turn to ghosts ;
The scanty pears and apples
Hang russet on the bough ;
It's Autumn, Autumn, Autumn late,
'Twill soon be winter now.
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin dear !
And what will this poor Robin do ?
For pinching days are near.

The fireside for the cricket,
The wheat-stack for the mouse,
When trembling night-winds whistle,
And moan all round the house ;
The frosty ways like iron,
The branches plumed with snow,—
Alas ! in winter dead and dark,
Where can poor Robin go ?
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin dear !
And a crumb of bread for Robin,
His little heart to cheer.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

October 28.

When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.—MICAH vii. 8.

As there comes a warm sunbeam into every cottage window, so comes a love-beam of God's care and pity for every separate need.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

MY WINDOW-IVY.

Over my window the ivy climbs,
Its roots are in homely jars ;
But all the day it looks at the sun,
And at night looks out at the stars.

The dust of the room may dim its green,
But I call to the breezy air :
"Come in, come in, good friend of mine,
And make my window fair ! "

So the ivy thrives from morn to morn,
Its leaves all turned to the light ;
And it gladdens my soul with its tender green,
And teaches me day and night.

What though the dust of earth would dim ?
There's a glorious outer air
That will sweep through my soul if I let it in,
And make it fresh and fair.

Dear God, let me grow from day to day,
Clinging and sunny and bright!
Though planted in shade Thy window is near,
And my leaves may turn to the light.

MARY MAPES DODGE.

October 29.

*Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth ;
a stranger, and not thine own lips.*—PROV. xxvii. 2.

It is a pleasure to have a kind thing done for you, but sometimes the pleasure is greatly lessened because what it cost to do it, is told. This story of a little boy shows the spirit in which we should do kind things:—“A man met a little fellow on the road, carrying a basket of blackberries, and said to him, ‘Samuel, where did you get such nice berries?’ ‘Over there, sir, in the briers.’ ‘Won’t your mother be glad to see you come home with a basket of such nice, ripe fruit?’ ‘Yes, sir,’ said Sammy, ‘she always seems glad when I hold up the berries; and I don’t tell her anything about the briers in my feet.’”

BOAST NOT.

Let all the good thou doest to man,
A gift be,—not a debt ;
And he will more remember thee,
The more thou dost forget.

Do it as one who knows it not ;
But rather like a vine
That, year by year, brings forth its grapes,
And cares not for the wine.

A horse, when he has run his race ;
A dog, when tracked the game ;
A bee, when it has honey made,
Do not their deeds proclaim.

Be silent, then, and, like the vine,
Bring forth what is in thee ;
It is thy duty to be good,
And man's, to honor thee.

RICHARD H. STODDARD.

October 30.

But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.—PROV. iv. 18.

THE sun has set ; his last rays are no longer seen ; he has faithfully performed his allotted task ; he has shone upon the world, giving gladness to many hearts, bringing forth the fruits and flowers. Have I been as faithful as the sun ? Has my face shone with the reflection of the bright, pure thoughts within ? Have I made my beams of kindness shine upon all, causing the flowers of joy and gladness to spring up and blossom and bring forth fruit ? Have no clouds of evil passion arisen to obscure the sun of my righteousness ? So let me go on, shining brighter and brighter, unto the perfect day.

LILIES AND ROSES.

When a child breathes a pure and earnest prayer
Or cheers with gentle words another's gloom,
In heavenly gardens springs a lily fair,
Before the angels evermore to bloom.

But when he works with strong and earnest will
Some kindly act,—beneath God's watchful eyes
A fragrant rose, more rare and precious still,
Makes glad the shining fields of Paradise.

So live, dear child, that each new day may see
Lilies and roses owe their life to thee !

October 31.

Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens : praise Him in the heights.—Psa. cxlviii. 1.

BEAUTIFUL SWISS CUSTOM. As soon as the sun has disappeared,—its last rays just glimmering on the snowy summits of the mountains,—the herdsman who dwells on the loftiest, takes his Alpine horn and trumpets forth: “Praise God, the Lord!” All the herdsmen in the neighborhood take their horns, and repeat the words. This often continues a quarter of an hour, while, on all sides, the mountains echo the name of God. Solemn stillness follows, and every shepherd, on bending knees, with uncovered head, offers his secret prayer. By this time, it is quite dark. “Good-night!” trumpets forth the herdsman on the loftiest summit. “Good-night!” is repeated on all the mountains, from the horns of the herdsmen, and the clefts of the rocks.

ALL GOOD-NIGHT.

All good-night! all good-night!
Now is labor ended quite :
Now the day is softly closing,—
Busy hands from toil reposing
Till new morning wakes to light ;
All good-night! all good night!

Sweetly rest! sweetly rest!
Weary eyelids downward pressed ;
Silence rests on field and mountain,
Softly murmur brook and fountain ;
Every bird has sought its nest ;
Sweetly rest! sweetly rest!

Peaceful sleep! peaceful sleep!
Sleep till morning's dawn doth peep ;
Sleep until another morrow
Brings its duty,—joy, or sorrow ;
Sleep,—our Father watch will keep,
Peaceful sleep! peaceful sleep!

November 1.

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth ; but the word of our God shall stand forever.—ISA. xl. 8.

THE leaves are falling to the ground, and the poor old branches of the trees look desolate. The sweet bird-songs are heard no more. The pretty flowers are fading, and hanging their bright heads as if sad and lonely. We, too, feel a little sad and lonely, and wonder why all things bright and beautiful must leave us. Will they be *sure* to come back again? Yes; God says, in the Bible: "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." His word is true. "The word of our God shall stand forever." So we will be happy, trusting His word, and will sing: "The spring will *surely* come again, bringing fresh, green leaves, bright flowers, and singing birds."

NOVEMBER.

The mellow year is hastening to its close ;
The little birds have almost sung their last,—
Their small notes twitter in the dreary blast,—
That shrill-piped harbinger of early snows.
The patient beauty of the scentless rose,
Oft with the morn's hoar crystal quaintly glassed,
Hangs, a pale mourner for the summer past,
And makes a little summer, where it grows.
In the chill sunbeam of the faint, brief day,
The dusky waters shudder, as they shine ;
The russet leaves obstruct the straggling way
Of oozy brooks, which no deep banks define ;
And the gaunt woods, in ragged, scant array,
Wrap their old limbs with sombre ivy twine.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

November 2.

And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?—MATT. vii. 3.

How much trouble he avoids who does not look to see what his neighbor says, or does, or thinks, but only to what he does himself,—that it may be just and pure.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

(Born in Rome, 121 years after Christ.)

IF! IF!

If every boy and every girl
Arising with the sun
Should plan this day to do alone
The good deeds to be done ;

Should scatter smiles and kindly words,—
Strong, helpful hands should lend,
And to each other's wants and cries
Attentive ears should bend ;

If every man and woman, too,
Should join these workers small,—
O, what a flood of happiness
Upon our earth would fall !

How many homes would sunny be
Which now are filled with care !
And joyous, smiling faces, too,
Would greet us everywhere.

I do believe the very sun
Would shine more clear and bright,
And every little twinkling star
Would shed a softer light.

But we, instead, must watch to see
If other folks are true,
And thus neglect so much, that God
Intends for us to do.

November 3.

Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of Him which is perfect in knowledge?—
JOB xxxvii. 16.

How much life there is asleep in the winter ! Look at that tree ! The buds are all there, covered up snugly from the cold, in their winter coats. The little things are very still, but they are alive. They only want a warm sun to make them show it. A great work they do, after their long winter sleep. Look up in the tree in summer and see how these leaf-buds have filled every branch with leaves. You can hardly believe that it is the same tree that you saw so bare in the winter. . . . The life in the roots of grass, and of many plants and shrubs, is asleep through the winter. The little mouths of the roots do not drink up any sap. But God sends to them the warm breezes of spring to waken them, sets the sap running, and then the buds come out, and from them are formed the leaves. What a busy workshop, as you may say, is every plant and tree in the spring, when all the leaves are making !

WORTHINGTON HOOKER.

DOWN TO SLEEP.

November woods are bare and still ;
November days are clear and bright ;
Each noon burns up the morning's chill,
The morning's snow is gone by night ;
Each day my steps grow slow, grow light,
As through the woods I reverent creep,
Watching all things lie down to sleep.

Each day, I find new coverlids
Tucked in, and more sweet eyes shut tight ;
Sometimes the viewless mother bids
Her ferns kneel down, full in my sight ;
I hear their chorus of "good-night" ;
And half I smile, and half I weep,
Listening while they lie down to sleep.

HELEN HUNT JACKSON.

November 4.

Teach me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end.—Psa. cxix. 33.

WHEN we love the Lord with all the heart, then, to follow Him fully is our own choice.

SARAH F. SMILEY.

THE FLOWERS KNOW THEIR TIME TO GO.

They know the time to go ;
The fairy clocks strike their inaudible hour
In field and woodland, and each punctual flower
Bows at the signal, an obedient head,
And hastens to bed.

The pale Anemone
Glides on her way with scarcely a good-night ;
The Violets tie their purple nightcaps tight ;
Hand clasped in hand, the dancing Columbines,
In blithesome lines,

Drop their last courtesies,
Flit from the scene, and crouch them for their rest ;
The Meadow-Lily folds her scarlet vest
And hides it 'neath the grasses' lengthening green ;
Fair and serene,

Her sister Lily floats
On the blue pond, and raises golden eyes
To court the golden splendor of the skies :—
The sudden signal comes, and down she goes
To find repose

In the cool depths below.
A little later, and the Asters blue
Depart in crowds,—a brave and cheery crew,
While Golden Rod, still wide awake and gay,
Turns him away,

Furls his bright parasol,
And, like a little hero, meets his fate.
The Gentians, very proud to sit up late,
Next follow. Every Fern is tucked and set
'Neath coverlet,

Downy and soft and warm.
No little seedling voice is heard to grieve,
Or make complaints, the folding woods beneath.
No lingerer dares to stay ; for well they know
The time to go !

Teach us your patience brave
Dear Flowers, till we shall dare to part like you,
Willing God's will, sure that His clock strikes true,
That His sweet day augurs a sweeter morrow,
With smiles, not sorrow.

SUSAN COOLIDGE.

November 5.

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth.—ISA. xl. 7.

THE bird, with its sensitive eye, grows melancholy in the shortened days and gathering mists of autumn. "Light! more light! Let us rather die than see the day no more!" This is the purport of its last autumnal strain,—its last cry on its departure. . . . But bethink thyself of the nest which thou has left in *our* woods. Love was around thee. True, light is where one loves. Come to us again, sweet bird!

JULES MICHELET.

THE ROBIN'S FLIGHT.

From off the hills the golden glow is fading, day by day ;
No more a spicy fragrance breathes from every wandering
spray ;
But silvery mists come creeping up, to spread their mantle
mild
O'er branches bare, and garnered fields, where late the glory
smiled ;
And all these dear November days,
How sweet the robins sing !
I pause to catch the liquid notes
Which through the stillness ring,
And pray,—as o'er my gladness
There steals a throb of pain,—
"God keep the dear old robins
Till they come back again !"

A few brief weeks ere nature dons the livery of death,
And blushing leaves grow pale and shrink before the north
wind's breath ;
The gentian blue, beside the brook, will droop its fringes
low,
And sleep, with many a blighted thing, beneath the drifted
snow ;

No longer from the sunny fields
The bubbling notes will rise,
Or, breast aflame, 'mid shading leaves,
Show where a treasure lies ;
Only the snow-bird hovering
Will twitter at the pane,
God care for all the robins,
And bring them back again !

Then, thro' the long, long winter days, when winds are
piping shrill,
And softly fall the feathered flakes, o'er meadow, mount,
and hill,
We'll smile to think their voice is heard in many fragrant
bowers,
Far in a sunny southern land, amid its vines and flowers.

Sing on, to all who love thee there !
Make bright their homes, as ours !
But come again to gladden us
With spring's first balmy hours ;
Then every heart that listens
Will join the happy strain,—
"God bless the dear old robins,
Who have come back again !"

FANNY BEULAH BATES.

November 6.

*I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou
shalt go ; I will guide thee with Mine eye.—PSA.
xxxii. 8.*

WE need only obey. There is guidance for each of us, and by lowly listening we shall hear the right word.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

TRUSTING.

O wise little birds ! how do you know
The way to go,—
Southward and northward, to and fro ?

Far up in the ether piped they :—
" We but obey
One who calleth us far away."

“ He calleth and calleth, year by year,
Now there, now here ;
Ever He maketh the way appear.”

Dear little birds, He calleth me
Who calleth ye !
Would that *I* might as trusting be !

HARRIET MC EWEN KIMBALL.

November 7.

Be clothed with humility : for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.—I PET. v. 5.

THERE is no true and constant gentleness without humility ; while we are so fond of ourselves, we are easily offended with others.

FRANÇOIS FENELON.

THE WEED'S MISSION.

Tall grew a weed outside a garden gate ;
Inside, a gladiole in splendor grew.
“ Why do *you* with the autumn blossoms wait ? ”
The flower asked. “ There is no need of *you*,—
In truth I know not why you live at all,—
Only a few pale, yellow blooms you bore,
And worthless are your seeds. Pray, droop and fall ;
I should not grieve at seeing you no more.
I grace the world, for evening's brightest skies
Are not more rich in gold and red than *I*,
And every day the lingering butterflies
Beg *me* to stay till *they* must say ' good-bye. ' ”

“ Yes, you *are* beautiful,” the weed replied
In patient voice, “ and I am plain indeed,
But God knows why.” Just then, a bird, bright-eyed
And scarlet-beaked, saw the clustering seed,
And, lighting on a slender branch, he ate
With many a little chirp of thankful glee ;
Then spread his wings and perched upon the gate,
And blessed his wayside friend in melody.
“ Ah ! ” said the weed, when he had flown,—“ proud flower,
A hungry, south-bound bird *you* could not feed ;
Though you rejoice in Beauty's gracious dower,—
That boon was granted to a humble weed.”

MARGARET EYTINGE.

November 8.

Behold the fowls of the air : for they sow not, neither do they reap nor gather into barns ; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them.—MATT. vi. 26.

WHO knows the hymn of the song-sparrows, the sweet jargon of the blackbirds, the fairy fluting of the oriole, the lonely, lovely, wooing call of the sandpiper, the cheerful challenge of the chickadee, the wild, clear whistle of the curlew, the twittering of the swallows as they go careening in wide curves through summer air, filling earth and heaven with tones of pure gladness,—each bird a marvel of grace, beauty and joy? God gave us these exquisite creatures for delight and solace. From infancy I have lived among them, have watched them with the most profound reverence and love, respected their rights, adored their beauty and their song, and I could no more injure a bird than I could hurt a child.

CELIA THAXTER.

THE SANDPIPER.

Across the narrow beach we flit
One little sandpiper and I ;
And fast I gather, bit by bit,
The scattered driftwood bleached and dry ;
The wild waves reach their hands for it,
The wild wind raves, the tide runs high,
As up and down the beach we flit,—
One little sandpiper and I.

Above our heads the sullen clouds
Scud black and swift across the sky ;
Like silent ghosts in misty shrouds
Stand out the white lighthouses high.
Almost as far as eye can reach
I see the close-reefed vessels fly,
As fast we flit along the beach,—
One little sandpiper and I.

I watch him as he skims along
Uttering his sweet and mournful cry ;
He starts not at my fitful song
Nor flash of fluttering drapery.
He has no thought of any wrong,
He scans me with a fearless eye ;
Stanch friends are we, well tried and strong,
The little sandpiper and I.

Comrade, where wilt thou be to-night
When the loosed storm breaks furiously ?
My driftwood fire will burn so bright !
To what warm shelter canst thou fly ?
I do not fear for thee, though wroth
The tempest rushes through the sky :
For are we not God's children both,
Thou, little sandpiper, and I ?

CELIA THAXTER.

November 9.

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.—ROM. viii. 25.

THINGS will come out right in the end, for those who look away from the gloom and wait patiently, trusting to the good time coming, and the kind Providence that watches over all.

AN ACORN LESSON.

A strong wind blew, a chill wind blew,
And the little brown acorn where he grew
Shivered, and then into the air
Leaped and fell, he knew not where,—
Fell, as it proved, where, covered deep,
Lay the crocus buds, in their winter sleep.

The acorn, spying them, small and brown,
Said, “ Ah ! it is well that I came down
Where little dark people live, like me ;
They are those that fell before, maybe.”
So he nestled under a bit of sod,
With them to drowse, and dream, and nod.

Presently, he became aware,
A bright, hot light was in the air ;
But what were his little neighbors at ?
One stood there in a purple hat,
Another had on a golden vest,
And another in snow-white gown was drest.

Great was the envious acorn's grief,
And he sobbed, " I haven't a single leaf ;
I am homely, and dull, and slow, and cold,
While all about me are capped in gold,
To be praised and loved,—and no one cares
How the plodding, hidden, acorn fares."

One month, and the blossoms all were dead ;
But a tiny root, like a small white thread,
Came from the acorn's doubting heart,—
This was a hope, at last,—a start ;
Yet, when the season faded, lo,
Four leaves were all he had to show !

For a spring or two, a brief, bright space,
The crocus flowers made gay the place ;
But the puny bulbs died out at length,
While the oak-sprout, adding strength to strength,
Had grown to be that joy to see,—
A broad-limbed, high-topped, leaf-crowned, tree.

Under his boughs the children played,
And travelers loitered within the shade,
Forgetting in that, that once of old,
Had crocuses ruled there, capped in gold.
The lesson is,—not by a single stroke
Of sun, can an acorn become an oak.

CLARA DOTY BATES.

November 10.

As Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.—HEB. viii. 5.

THERE are two ways of doing wrong,—one way is by trying to do it, and the other is by being thoughtless and careless ; the one is wickedness,—the other foolishness.

ROBERT BIRD.

THE WEAVER.

A weaver sat one day at his loom
Among the colors bright,
With the pattern for his copying
Hung fair and plain in sight :
But the weaver's thoughts were wandering
Away on a distant track,
As he threw the shuttle in his hand
Wearily forward and back.

And then the weaver looked and saw
His work must be undone ;
For the threads were wrong, and the colors dimmed
Where the bitter tears had run.
Ah ! sad it was for the weaver,
And sad for his luckless wife ;
And sad will it be for us, if we say,
At the end of our task in life,
We wove a web of doubt and fear,—
Not faith, and hope, and love,
Because we looked at our work, and not
At our Pattern, up above.

November 11.

Be strong and of good courage ; dread not, nor be dismayed.—I CHRON. xxii. 13.

COURAGE is needed in little things as well as in great. A boy or girl who is courageous will never give up a task because it is hard. It often takes courage to tell the truth. It takes courage to do right at all times. When denied what we very much wish, it takes courage to bear the denial with patience. Whether we ever have an opportunity to do *great*, brave deeds or not, we can show our courage just as much by being brave in *little* things.

JULIA M. DEWEY.

DARE TO DO RIGHT.

Dare to be honest, good and sincere ;
Dare to please God, and you never need fear.

Dare to be brave in the cause of the right ;
Dare with the enemy ever to fight.

Dare to be patient and loving each day ;
Dare speak the truth, whatever you say.

Dare to be gentle, and orderly too ;
Dare shun the evil, whatever you do.

Dare to speak kindly, and ever be true ;
Dare to do right, and you'll find your way through.

November 12.

Thou hast set all the borders of the earth ; Thou hast made summer and winter.—Psa. lxxiv. 17.

A POOR little city girl, who had few things to make her happy, said joyfully: “I went into the country last summer, and it was all *so* beautiful! The flowers, and the birds, and the sky,—and *so much room* to play in! I think about it every day, and I guess the good time I had, will make me happy all winter!” . . . Do we ever think that one of God’s good gifts to us, is the power to remember pleasant things? You remember the lovely flowers in grandmamma’s garden, and are happy in thinking you may see them again next summer. You think of the seashore, and, as you sit by the winter-fire, you can almost hear the music of the waves rolling up on the sandy beach, as you heard them in other days.

“The beautiful pictures that hang on memory’s wall” are the gifts of God to make you happy.

A SONG WITHOUT WORDS.

“Play us a tune,” cried the children,—
 “Something merry and sweet,
 Like the birds when they sing in summer,
 Or the nodding tips of the wheat
 Dancing across the meadows
 While the warm sun burns and glows,
 Till we’ll fancy we smell in winter
 The breath of a sweet June rose !”

“Play us a tune,” said the mother,—
 “Something tender and low,
 Like a thought that comes in the autumn,
 When the leaves are ready to go ;
 When the fire on the hearth is lighted,
 And we know not which are best,—
 The long, bright evenings coming,
 Or the long, bright days at rest !”

And the dear little artist bending
 Over the swaying bow,
 Drew tones so merry and gladsome,
 With tones so sweet and low,
 That we scarce could tell, who listened,
 Which song had the sweeter words,—
 The one that sang of the fireside,
 Or the one that sang of the birds !

M. E. B.

November 13.

And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times,—Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for Thy servant heareth.—I SAM. iii. 10.

GOD never ceases to speak, but the noise of the creatures without and of our passions within, deafens us, and hinders us from hearing Him. Ah ! how rare it is to find a soul still enough to hear God speak !

FRANÇOIS FENELON.

THE CHILD SAMUEL.

Hushed was the evening hymn,
The temple courts were dark ;
The lamp was burning dim
Before the sacred ark ;
When suddenly, a voice divine
Awoke the silence of the shrine.

The old man, meek and mild,
The priest of Israel, slept ;
His watch the temple-child,—
The little Samuel kept ;
And what from Eli's sense was sealed,
Was to the little child revealed.

So, to each waiting heart,
Some word divine is given ;
Still to the listening ear
Speaketh the voice from Heaven ;
I, too, would hear and keep Thy word,
And be Thy loving child, O Lord !

O, give me Samuel's ear.—
The open ear, O Lord !
Alive and quick to hear
Each whispering of Thy word ;
Like him to answer at Thy call,
And to obey Thee first of all.

J. D. BURNS.

November 14.

O Lord, Thou knowest.—JER. xv. 15.

THINGS are not always bright with the little ones, and they do not always get as much sympathy as they want, because their troubles are not exactly the same sort as those of grown-up people. Has there been something of this sort, to-day, dear little one? . . . Take this little pillow to rest your tired and troubled heart upon, to-night,—“*Thou knowest.*” Thou, Lord Jesus, kind Shepherd of the weary or wandering little lambs,—Thou

knowest all about it. Thou hast heard the words that made me feel so badly; Thou hast seen just what happened that troubled me; Thou knowest what I could not explain; "Thou understandest my thought." Is it not comfort just to know that He knows? He can do anything; so, surely, He can make things come right for you,—really right,—not perhaps what you fancy would be nicest and most right. If He knows about your trouble, He cares about it too. And He not only cares, but loves,—so that He would not have let this trouble touch His dear child, but that He wanted it to be a little messenger to call you to Him to be comforted, and to show you that He is your best friend, and to teach you the sweetness of saying,—"Thou knowest."

OUR SHEPHERD.

Jesus is our Shepherd,
Wiping every tear;
Folded in His bosom
What have we to fear?

Only let us follow
Whither He doth lead,—
To the thirsty desert
Or the dewy mead.

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

November 15.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.—I COR. xv. 58.

If a storm comes, it only makes the well-rooted tree more sturdy and steadfast. Why? Because it drives the tiniest rootlets, even, to take firmer hold of that which supports them; shaking only quickens them, and makes them alive to their finest fibres.

HELEN B. BOSTWICK.

We all have troubles, and temptations to do wrong,—we might call them the storms of life that spoil our happy sunshine,—but, if they make us cling more closely to God for help, and strive earnestly ourselves to bear the troubles and to overcome the temptations, we shall grow braver and stronger, each day. God lets them come to us to make us strong.

THE FIR-TREE.

Hark! hark! What does the fir-tree say?
Standing still,—all night, all day,
Never a moan from over his way;
Green, through all the winter's gray,—
What does the steadfast fir-tree say?

Creak, creak! Listen! Be firm, be true!
The winter's frost, and the summer's dew
Are all in God's time, and all for you;
Only live your life, and your duty do,
And be brave and strong, and steadfast, and true.

LUELLA CLARK.

November 16.

Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever.—Psa. cvi. 1.

THERE is little need that I should tell you of God, for everything speaks of Him. Every field is like an open book; every painted flower hath a lesson written on its leaves. Every murmuring brook hath a tongue; a voice is in every whispering wind. They all speak of Him who made them; they all tell us He is very good.

ANNA LÆTITIA BARBAULD.

GOD IS GOOD.

God is good! each perfumed flower,
The smiling fields, the dark green wood,
The insect, fluttering for an hour,—
All things proclaim that God is good.

I hear it in each breath of wind ;
Hills, that have for ages stood,
And clouds, with gold and silver lined,
Are still repeating, God is good.

Each little rill, that many a year
Has the same verdant path pursued,
And every bird, in accents clear,
Joins in the song, that God is good.

The restless sea, with haughty roar,
Calms each wild wave and billow rude,
Retreats submissive from the shore,
And swells the chorus,—“ God is good.”

The countless hosts of twinkling stars
Sing His praise with light renewed ;
The rising sun each day declares,
In rays of glory, God is good.

The moon that walks in brightness, says
That God is good !—and man, endued
With power to speak his Maker's praise,
Should still repeat that God is good.

ELIZA LEE FOLLEN.

November 17.

Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man, and fear thy God : I am the Lord.
—LEV. xix. 32.

THERE is a sweet old song, with a picture of a grandfather, sitting in his great armchair,—a little girl asleep in his arms. It is called :—“ The Farmer Sat in His Easy-Chair.” We can imagine how they had been chatting lovingly together, while the grandmother was spinning, and the house-dog lay stretched on the sunny floor. Now,—

“ His silver locks 'mid her soft hair lay,—
Fast asleep were they both on that summer day.”

Let us always be kind to the old. Most of their early friends have passed away, and they would be very lonely without the love of the children.

TO GRANDPAPA, ON HIS SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY.

Early in the morning
At the break of day,
Came a little fairy
Whispering all the way :—

“ Wake up, little sister,
See the sunbeams play,
See the gay leaves dancing,—
‘Tis grandpapa’s birthday ! ”

Then my eyes, wide opening,
I bade the fairy flee,
And give our grandpa kisses
From the boys and me.

“ Tell him, little fairy,
That we love him well
And wish him happy birthdays
More than we can tell :

“ Tell him, pretty fairy,
We ne’er forget to pray
God keep our darling grandpa,
And bless him every day.”

Written by a little girl, ten years old.

November 18.

*There be many that say, Who will shew us any good ?
Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon
us.—Psa. iv. 6.*

LOVING trust in Jesus,—having Him as our constant companion, trusting Him to take care of us in everything,—helps us to be contented, even though our surroundings are not what we would like them to be.

THE SHINING LITTLE HOUSE.

It hung in the sun, the little house,
It hung in the sun, and shone ;
And through the walls I could hear his voice
Who had it all for his own.

The walls were of wire, as bright as gold,
Wrought in a pretty design ;
The spaces between, for windows served,
And the floor was clean and fine.

There was plenty, too, to eat and drink,
In this little house that shone ;
A lucky thing to be sure, you'd say,—
A house like this, for one's own !

But the door was shut, and locked all tight,
The key was on the outside ;
The one who was in could not get out,
No matter how much he tried.

'Twas only a prison, after all,—
This bright little house that shone ;
Ah, we would not want a house like that,
No matter if 'twere our own !

And yet, through the walls I heard the voice
Of the one who lived inside ;
To warble a sweeter song each day,
It did seem as if he tried.

To open the door he never sought,
Nor fluttered, in idle strife ;
He ate and he drank, and slept, and sang,
And made the best of his life.

And I, to myself, said, every day,
As his cheery song I heard,
There's a lesson for us in every note
Of that little imprisoned bird.

We all of us live a life like this,—
We are walled in on every side ;
We all long to do a hundred things
Which we could not, if we tried.

We can spend our strength all foolishly,
In a discontented strife ;
Or we can be wise, and laugh, and sing,
And make the best of our life.

HELEN HUNT.

November 19.

Wait on the Lord: be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.—Psa. xxvii. 14.

WHEN every leaf is dropped, and the plant stands stripped to the uttermost, a new life is even then working in the buds, from which shall spring a tender foliage and a brighter wealth of flowers.

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

NOVEMBER.

The leaves are fading and falling,
The winds are rough and wild,
The birds have ceased their calling,
But let me tell you, my child,

Though day by day, as it closes,
Doth darker and colder grow,
The roots of the bright red roses
Will keep alive in the snow.

And when the winter is over,
The boughs will get new leaves ;
The quail come back to the clover,
And the swallow back to the eaves.

The robin will wear on his bosom
A vest that is bright and new,
And the loveliest wayside blossom
Will shine with the sun and dew.

The leaves to-day are whirling,
The brooks are all dry and dumb ;
But let me tell you, my darling,
The spring will be sure to come.

There must be rough, cold weather,
And winds and rains, so wild ;
Not *all* good things together
Come to us here, my child.

So, when some dear joy loses
Its beauteous summer glow,
Think how the roots of the roses
Are kept alive in the snow.

ALICE CARY.

November 20.

I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God; in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler.—Psa. xcii. 2, 3.

The Lord shall guide thee continually.—Isa. lviii. 11.

I see my way as birds their trackless way ;
In some time,—His good time,—I shall arrive .
He guides me and the bird.

ROBERT BROWNING.

TO A WATER-FOWL.

Whither, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, thro' their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way ?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly limned upon the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink,
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean side ?

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,—
The desert and illimitable air,—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end ;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows ; reeds shall bend
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone,—the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form ; yet, on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He, who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

WILLIAM C. BRYANT.

November 21.

And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.—LUKE vi. 31.

“POOR little leaf, how homely you are ! What made you so ?”

“The sun does not shine as bright now as it did in summer,” answered the leaf ; “so the sap does not run through my veins and feed me. You see the sun has to shine upon a leaf, and draw the sap from the trunk of the tree.”

“Well, I’m glad I’m not so faded and dried up as you are.”

“Perhaps you would be if you were starved to death, as I was,” answered the dead leaf, with a sigh. “Once I was a beautiful green leaf, giving shade to the birds

that build in our tree. Then, I was a bright, red leaf,
that helped to make this old earth look gay and cheerful,
and now — ”

“ Now you are of no use at all.”

“ O, yes, I am,” answered the leaf; “ I will be a
little blanket to keep some flower warm as it sleeps in
its bed all winter.”

“ My ! my ! If a dead leaf can be of some use, every
little boy and girl can also find some one to help.”

THE VOICE OF A LEAF.

I was born of a bud in spring-time,
And fed by the gentle showers ;
The genial rays of the kindly sun
Gave strength to my earlier hours.

The thoughtful summer rocked me
In the cradle of her storm,
And I grew, by magic forces,
Into fair and perfect form.

Autumn came with rude unkindness,
And her frosts dissolved the spell
Which to the branches bound my life ;
And down to earth I fell.

But, surely, I'm not forgotten,
Though cycles of life are crossed ;
Though by the foot of the traveler
Ruthlessly I am tossed.

Perhaps I'll be remembered,
Though my course was quickly run,
By the pilgrim whom I shaded
From the summer's burning sun.

Pursue thy way, O traveler,—
Each day use well thy powers,
Thus gathering 'round thy memory
New joys for lonelier hours.

November 22.

Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.—PROV. iv. 14, 15.

TAKE hold, my son, of the toughest knots of life, and try to untie them; try to be worthy of man's highest estate; have high, noble, manly honor. There is but one test of everything; and that is,—“*Is it right?*” If it is not, turn away from it.

HENRY A. WISE.

A BIT OF A SERMON.

Whatsoe'er you find to do,
Do it, boys, with all your might;
Never be a *little* true,
Or a *little* in the right.
Trifles even
Lead to heaven,
Trifles make the life of man;
So, in all things,—
Great or small things,—
Be as thorough as you can.

Help the weak, if you are strong,
Love the old, if you are young;
Own a fault, if you are wrong,
If you're angry, hold your tongue.
In each duty
Lies a beauty,
If your eyes you do not shut:
Just as surely,
And securely
As a kernel in a nut.

* * * * *

Whatsoe'er you find to do,
Do it, then, with all your might;
Let your prayers be strong and true,—
Prayer, my lads, will keep you right:
Pray in all things,—
Great and small things,—

Like a Christian gentleman;
And forever,
Now and ever,
Be as thorough as you can.

Good Words for the Young.

November 23.

*Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines :
for our vines have tender grapes.*—SONG OF SOLOMON,
ii. 15.

THE first risings of sinful thoughts and desires are like the “little foxes” which, if not taken, will spoil our characters.

THOMAS SCOTT.

Make sure that however good you may be, you have faults ; that however dull you may be, you can find out what they are ; and that however slight they may be, you would better make some patient effort to get quit of them.

JOHN RUSKIN.

LITTLE FOXES.

Among my tender vines I spy
A little fox named “ *By and by* ; ”
Then set upon him quick, I say,
The swift young hunter,—“ *Right away*.”

Around each tender vine I plant,
I find the little fox,—“ *I can’t* ; ”
Then, fast as ever hunter ran,
Chase him with bold and brave “ *I can*.”

“ *No use in trying*,”—“ *Lags and whines*,”—
This fox among my tender vines ;
Then drive him low, and drive him high,
With this good hunter, named, “ *I’ll try*.”

Among the vines in my small lot
Creeps in the young fox,—“ *I forgot* ; ”
Then hunt him out and to his den
With,—“ *I will not forget again*.”

A little fox is hidden there
Among my vines, named, " *I don't care;*"
Then let " *I'm sorry,*"—hunter true,
Chase him afar from vines and you.

A. H. MORRELL.

November 24.

Then came Peter to Him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven.

—MATT. xviii. 21, 22.

I REMEMBER once mother had been trying to make us forgive each other's trespasses, and Arthur would say that you cannot *make* yourself feel kindly to them that trespass against you; and mother said, if you make yourself *do* right, then at last you get to *feel* right.

JULIANA HORATIA EWING.

FORGIVENESS.

When, for some little insult given
My angry passions rise,
I'll think, how Jesus came from Heaven,
And bore His injuries.

He was insulted every day,
Though all His words were kind;
But nothing men could do or say
Disturbed His heavenly mind.

Not all the wicked scoffs He heard
Against the truths He taught,
Excited one reviling word,
Or one revengeful thought.

And when upon the cross He bled,
With all His foes in view,—
" Father, forgive their sins," He said;
" They know not what they do."

Dear Jesus, may I learn of Thee
My temper to amend;
And speak the pardoning word for me,
Whenever I offend.

JANE TAYLOR.

November 25.

Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.—PROV. xxi. 23.

AFTER a word is spoken, you cannot make it unsaid. After a thing is done, you cannot undo it. How careful we should be, then, to have our words and acts right, in the first place, so that we need not wish to change them!

THE TONGUE.

“The boneless tongue, so small and weak,
Can crush and kill,” declared the Greek.

“The tongue destroys a greater horde,”
The Turk asserts, “than does the sword.”

The Persian proverb wisely saith,—
“A lengthy tongue, an early death ;”

Or sometimes takes this form instead,—
“Don’t let your tongue cut off your head.”

“The tongue can speak a word whose speed,”
Says the Chinese,—“outstrips the steed;”

While Arab sages this impart,—
“The tongue’s great storehouse is the heart.”

From Hebrew wit, the maxim sprung,—
“Though feet should slip, ne’er let the tongue.”

The sacred writer crowns the whole,—
“Who keeps his tongue doth keep his soul.”

PHILIP B. STRONG.

November 26.

The shew of their countenance doth witness against them.—ISA. iii. 9

BEAUTY in the heart will find its way to the face.

YOUR FACES.

I know they are rosy, children,
I know that your eyes are bright,
That your cheeks have the cunningest dimples,
And your brows are fair as the light ;
But I know something else, my darlings,
That maybe you have not heard,—
So listen, my pets, and remember
A wise old grandmother's word :—
Whenever you fret and quarrel,
Whenever you frown or cry,
There's a line on your face that tells it,
And will tell it, by and by ;
And when you would fain look pleasant,
The tell-tale marks will say ;—
" She, or he, may try to be pretty,
But have been cross, in their day."

November 27.

In everything give thanks : for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.—I THESS. v. 18.

" HELP us never to get so used to Thy mercies, that we shall forget to thank Thee for them, as they are renewed day by day."

THANKSGIVING.

" Have you cut the wheat in the blowing field,
The barley, the oats and the rye,
The golden corn, and the pearly rice ?
For the winter days are nigh."
" We have reaped them all from shore to shore,
And the grain is safe on the threshing-floor."

“ Have you gathered the berries from the vine,
And the fruit from the orchard trees?
The dew and the scent from the rose and thyme
In the hive of the honey-bees ? ”

“ The peach and the plum and the apple are ours,
And the honeycomb from the scented flowers.”

“ The wealth of the snowy cotton-field
And the gift of the sugar-cane,
The savory herb and the nourishing root,—
There has nothing been given in vain.”

“ We have gathered the harvest from shore to shore,
And the measure is full, and running o'er.”

“ Then lift up the head with a song !
And lift up the hands with a gift !
To the ancient Giver of all
The spirit in gratitude lift !
For the joy and the promise of spring
For the hay and clover sweet,
The barley, the rye and the oats,
The rice and the corn, and the wheat,
The cotton, and sugar, and fruit,
The flowers, and the fine honeycomb,
The country, so fair and so free,
The blessing and glory of home ; ”

“ Thanksgiving ! Thanksgiving ! Thanksgiving ! ”
Joyfully, gratefully call
To God, the Preserver of men,—
The bountiful Father of all.

AMELIA E. BARR.

November 28.*Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.—PSA. li. 7.*

THE SNOW-PRAYER.

A LITTLE girl went out to play one day in the snow, and, when she came in, she said: “ Mamma, I couldn't help praying when I was out at play ; I prayed the snow-prayer, that I learned once in Sunday-school, ‘ Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.’ ”

What a beautiful prayer ! And here is the promise

that goes with it: "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow." And what can make them white—clean from every stain of sin? The Bible answers: "They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

SNOWFLAKES.

Whence come these feathery forms of light
That meet our wondering eyes?
Say, were they borne on angels' wings,
From lands beyond the skies?

They come, they come, with noiseless tread,
A bright and glittering band;
Their fairy forms of matchless grace,
Fresh from a Father's Hand.

A carpet soft they quickly spread
O'er mountain, hill and glen;
O'er forest deep, and quiet glade,
And on the homes of men.

Alike on lordly cities fair,
And on each quiet town;
On lofty hall, and lowly cot
Cometh this blessing down.

Say, wherefore come these dazzling forms
Arrayed in purest white,
All fashioned by a Hand divine
Whose dwelling is the light?

They come to teach us lessons sweet,
Of peace, and joy, and love;
To lead our thoughts from earthly things
To Heavenly things, above.

We love the summer raindrops well,
That patter on the leaves;
As well we love the fleecy wreath
Which winter for us weaves.

Both are alike the gift of One
Of boundless power and worth,
Who sendeth down the gentle showers
To beautify the earth.

O, may this Father, ever kind
 Our inward spirit bless,
 And keep us, like the snowflakes, pure,
 Till in His home we rest.

November 29.

Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?—ISA. xl. 28.

Behold, He taketh up the isles as a very little thing.—ISA. xl. 15.

Thy right hand hath holden me up.—PSA. xviii. 35.

EVERY day is a little life, and our whole life is but a day repeated.

JOSEPH HALL.

THE DAYS AND THE YEAR.

What is the world, my little one?
 Our world belongs to that clock, the sun;
 Steady it spins; while the clock beats true
 Days and seasons for me and you;
 And tick, tick, tock, goes the mighty clock
 While time swings on below,
 Now left, now right, now day, now night,
 With a tick, tock, to and fro.

The pussy-willow in coat of fur,
 A sweet pink rose in the wind astir,
 A maple-leaf with a crimson blush,
 Then falling snowflakes and winter's hush;
 While tick, tick, tock, goes the mighty clock
 And the world swings on below,
 Budding, blowing, shining, snowing,
 With a tick, tock, to and fro.

A little song when the heart is glad,
 A little sigh when the way is sad,
 Whether the shadows or sunbeams fall
 Sweet rest and dreaming at last for all;

While tick, tick, tock, goes the mighty clock,
And the world swings on below,
Smiling, sighing, singing, crying,
With a tick, tock, to and fro.

So is the way, my own little one,
Our world belongs to that clock, the sun,
And the Hand that somewhere keeps the key
Is the same that holdeth you and me ;
While tick, tick, tock, goes the mighty clock,
And the world swings on below,
Now left, now right, now day, now night,
With a tick, tock, to and fro.

HARRIET F. BLODGETT.

November 30.

He that keepeth thee will not slumber.—Psa. cxxi. 3.

THE One who loves you best of all is watching you all the time; the One who careth for you never sleeps,— “He that keepeth thee will not slumber.” He is there all the time, never leaving you one moment alone, never going away at all. It makes no difference to Him that it is very dark, for “the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee.” And all through the dark hours He “keepeth thee”; keeps you from everything that could hurt or even frighten you,—so that you may safely and quietly take the sweet sleep He gives you.

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

THE CHILD'S GOOD-NIGHT.

Moon, moon, where are you going,
Through the clouds, and over the sky ?
The crickets are chirping, the night-winds are blowing,
And I'm at my window to bid you good-bye.
Good moon, good-night !

Stars, you are sleepy, I know by your winking.
And your mother, the moon, comes to put you to bed ;
She'll cover you up with the clouds, I am thinking
And tuck you all in, till the morning is red.
Good-night, stars ! good-night !

Birds in their nests, and chicks with their mother,
Lambs in the fold, and calves in the stall ;
I, in my bed, and the kits with each other,
And the same Heavenly Father takes care of us all.
Good-night, all ! Good-night !

SIDNEY E. HOLMES.

December 1.

And lo, the star which they (the wise men) saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.—MATT. ii. 9, 10.

BEAUTIFUL and right it is that gifts and good wishes should fill the air like snowflakes at Christmas-tide. And beautiful is the year in its coming, and in its going,—most beautiful and blessed, because it is always the year of our Lord.

LUCY LARCOM.

DECEMBER.

December's come and with her brought
A world, in whitest marble wrought ;
The trees, and fence, and all the posts
Stand motionless, as white as ghosts,
And all the paths we used to know
Are hidden in the drifts of snow.
December brings the longest night,
And cheats the day of half its light ;
No song-bird breaks the perfect hush ;
No meadow-brook, with liquid gush,
Runs, telling tales in babbling rhyme
Of liberty and summer-time,
But, frozen in its icy cell,
Awaits the sun, to break the spell.
Breathe once upon the window-glass,
And see the mimic mists that pass,—
Fantastic shapes, that go and come
Forever silvery and dumb.

December, Santa Claus shall bring,—
Of happy children, happy king,—
Who, with his sleigh and reindeer stops
At all good people's chimney-tops.
Then let the holly red be hung,
And all the sweetest carols sung,
While we, with joy, remember them,—
The journeyers to Bethlehem,—
Who followed, trusting from afar
The guidance of that happy star
Which marked the spot where Christ was born,
Long years ago, one Christmas morn !

FRANK DEMPSTER SHERMAN.

December 2.

Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people.—LEV. xix. 16.

All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.—MATT. vii. 12.

WOULD you like to have some one repeat to you unpleasant, unkind things said about you? I think not. Then be careful *never* to make others unhappy by repeating unkind words to them.

A writer says: "Here is a beautiful little bridle to put on your tongue: 'Speaking the truth *in love*.' If you hold it fast, your tongue will never make trouble by scattering angry, or false, or unkind words."

If, however, you hear pleasant things spoken of another, how delightful it is to give him happiness and encouragement by repeating them.

"I heard the teacher say you were one of his best readers," said one boy to another. The little fellow was pleased and encouraged to do his best, and his mother, who overheard the remark, and who was toiling and saving to give her fatherless boy an education, was made happy and thankful.

WHEN TO MAKE HASTE.

If anything unkind you hear
About some one you know, my dear,
Do not, I pray you it repeat
When you that some one chance to meet,
For such news has a leaden way
Of clouding o'er a sunny day.

But, if you something pleasant hear,
About some one you know, my dear,
Make haste,—to make great haste were well ;
To her or him the same to tell ;
For such news has a golden way
Of lighting up a cloudy day.

December 3.

The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth.—Psa. cxlv. 18.

CAN we raise our voices up to the high heaven ? Can we make Him hear, who is above the stars ? We need not raise our voices to the stars, for He heareth us when we only whisper, when we breathe out words softly with a low voice. He that filleth the heavens is here also.

ANNA LÆTITIA BARBAULD.

EVENING HYMN.

Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me ;
Bless Thy little lamb to-night ;
Through the darkness be Thou near me
Watch my sleep till morning light.

All this day Thy hand has led me,
And I thank Thee for Thy care ;
Thou hast clothed me, warmed and fed me,—
Listen to my evening prayer.

Let my sins be all forgiven ;
Bless the friends I love so well ;
Take me, when I die, to Heaven,
Happy there with Thee to dwell.

MARY LUNDIE DUNCAN.

December 4.

He saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth.—JOB xxxvii. 6.

THE ground is white in winter, because there are so many little snowflakes that are so. The forest is green in June, because there are so many little leaves that are so. If we make each thought pure, and each act noble, our whole lives will be pure and noble.

CHARLES H. PARKHURST.

THE BEAUTIFUL SNOW.

Oh, the snow, the beautiful snow !
Filling the sky and earth below ;
Over the house-tops, over the street,
Over the heads of the people you meet,
Dancing,

Flirting,

Skipping along,

Beautiful snow, it can do no wrong ;
Flying to kiss a fair lady's cheek,
Clinging to lips in a frolicsome freak,
Beautiful snow, from the heavens above,
Pure as an angel, gentle as love !

Oh, the snow, the beautiful snow !
How the flakes gather, and laugh as they go !
Whirling about in their maddening fun ;
It plays in its glee, with every one,

Chasing,

Laughing,

Hurrying by ;

It lights on the face, and it sparkles the eye ;
And playful dogs, with a bark and a bound,
Snap at the crystals that eddy around ;
The town is alive, and its heart in a glow,
To welcome the coming of beautiful snow.

December 5.

See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.
—I PET. i. 22.

THE little daughter of Dr. Doddridge was once asked why every one loved her. She looked very thoughtful for a moment, and then said,—“ I suppose it is because I love everybody.”

DARK THE DAY BUT BRIGHT THE HEART.

Dark the day, but bright the heart,
True, true friends can never part,
Cold the storm, and dark the day,—
We can love, and love alway.

Though the winds should moan and cry,
Though they wearily should sigh,
Love can shed a gladsome ray,—
We can love, and love alway.

Then, when spring-time’s happy bloom
Sheds about a rich perfume,
Love’s sweet harvest ours, that day,
We will love, and love alway.

DORA READ GOODALE

December 6.

Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick?
—NEH. ii. 2.

IT was not a very pleasant face that came to papa, for the finishing touches to his dress. “ There! everything is on now ! ” shouted Van. “ Why, no, Van ! ” said papa, soberly, “ you haven’t put everything on yet.” Van carefully inspected his clothes, from the tips of his small toes to the broad collar about his neck. He could find nothing wanting. “ You haven’t put your smile on yet,” said papa, with the tiny wrinkles

beginning to creep about his own eyes. "Put it on, Van, and I'll button it up for you." And Van began to put it on, then and there. After that, he could not really call himself dressed for the day until he had put on a sunny face.

IF I KNEW.

If I knew the box where the smiles are kept,
No matter how large the key,
Or strong the bolt, I would try so hard,—
'Twould open, I know, for me.

Then over the land and sea, broadcast
I'd scatter the smiles to play,
That the children's faces might hold them fast
For many and many a day.

If I knew a box that was large enough
To hold all the frowns I meet,
I would try to gather them, every one,
From nursery, school and street;

Then, folding and holding, I'd pack them in
And turn the monster key;
I'd hire a giant to drop the box
To the depths of the deep, deep sea.

December 7.

Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.—PSA. xxxi. 24.

I'VE been a great deal happier since I have given up thinking about what is easy and pleasant, and being discontented because I couldn't have my own will. Our life is determined for us; and it makes the mind very free when we give up wishing, and think only of bearing what is laid upon us, and doing what is given us to do.

GEORGE ELIOT.

OUT IN THE COLD.

Why, Pansy ! little Pansy ! what a merry face you show,
Out among the withered leaves, where the cold winds blow !
What you *can* be smiling at, puzzles one to tell,—
Do you like to live and bloom all alone, so well ?

You have got no almanac ! Do you not remember,
Pansy, little Pansy bright, that it is December ?

Why, Pansy ! little Pansy ! see, the sky is dark and gray !
And I think,—I'm almost sure,—it will snow to-day ;
Are you not afraid at all, staying here so long ?
Every summer bird has gone, with its merry song.

Pansy, hark ! how still it is ! Do you not remember
All the pleasant days are done, and it is December ?

Why, Pansy ! little Pansy ! what a teacher you can be,
Blooming there so cheerfully, for all eyes to see ;
Showing such a happy face, on the darkest day ;
Never frowning, just because sunshine will not stay !

Pansy, little Pansy bright, help us to remember
We should keep our hearts abloom, even in December !

JENNIE HARRISON.

December 8.

Neither shall they say, Lo, here ! or, lo, there ! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.—LUKE xvii. 21.

O THAT we could always think of God as we do of a friend,—as of One who loves us even more than we do ourselves !

RICHARD BAXTER.

A CHILD-SONG.

I am God's little lamb ;
Where His green pastures lie,
He leads me, He feeds me :
And when, by and by,
O'er life's rugged mountains
My footsteps shall stray,
His hand shall still hold me,
And show me the way.

I am God's little dove ;
Ah, how downy my nest !
How blithe is my waking,
How sweet is my rest !
And, when, on my strong wings,
Some day, I shall rove,
My home shall be still
In the arms of His love.

I am God's little bud ;
What with sunshine and dew,
And the breath of His mouth,
I am glad through and through !
I hope I shall blossom
As sweet as a rose,
Because of the lovely,
Good gifts He bestows.

I am God's little child ;
That is better than all !
He bids me obey Him ;
I'll follow His call ;
My love and my service
I'll gratefully give,
And praise Him and bless Him
As long as I live.

CAROLINE A. MASON.

December 9.

The eyes of all wait upon Thee ; and Thou givest them their meat in due season.—Psa. cxlv. 15.

A LITTLE girl, seeing the servant throw the crumbs into the fire, said,—“Don’t you know that God takes care of the sparrows ?”

“If God takes care of them,” was the careless reply, “we need not trouble ourselves about them.”

“But,” said the little girl, “I would rather be like God, and help Him take care of the little birds, than scatter or waste the food that He gives us.” She carefully collected what was left of the crumbs and threw them out of the window. In a short time several little

birds flew eagerly to the spot, and picked up the crumbs she had scattered. After this, she every day collected the crumbs that fell around the table and threw them out of the window for the little birds, and, during all the winter, these little creatures came regularly after each meal to partake of the food thus provided. This was her idea of "helping God."

Our Dumb Animals.

THE SNOW-BIRDS.

When winter winds are blowing,
And clouds are full of snow,
There comes a flock of little birds
A-flying to and fro,
About the withered garden,
Around the naked field,
In any wayside shrub or tree
That may a berry yield ;
You'll see them, flitting, flitting,
And hear their merry song ;
The scattered crumbs of summer's feast
Feed winter birdlings long.

But when the snow-drifts cover
The garden and the field,—
When all the shrubs are cased in ice,
And every brook is sealed,
Then come the little snow-birds
As beggars, to your door ;
They pick up every tiny crumb,
With eager chirps for more ;
Like wandering musicians,
They, 'neath the windows, sing ;
All winter long, they stroll about,
And leave us in the spring.

Off to the land of icebergs,
To islands cold and drear,
They fly, before the summer comes
To frolic with us here.
Give them a hearty welcome !
It surely were not good
That they who sing in winter-time
Should ever lack for food.

December 10.

None of us liveth to himself.—ROM. xiv. 7.

GOD has written upon the flower that sweetens the air, upon the breeze that rocks the flower on its stem, upon the raindrops which swell the mighty river, upon the dew-drop that refreshes the smallest sprig of moss that rears its head in the desert, upon the ocean that rocks every swimmer in its chambers, upon every penciled shell that sleeps in the caverns of the deep, as well as upon the mighty sun which warms and cheers the millions of creatures that live in its light,—upon *all* hath He written, “*None of us liveth to himself.*”

JOHN TODD.

HELP ONE ANOTHER.

“ Help one another,” the snowflakes said,
As they cuddled down in their fleecy bed ;
“ One of us here would not be felt,
One of us here would quickly melt ;
But I’ll help you and you help me,
And then what a big white drift we’ll see ! ”

“ Help one another,” the maple spray
Said to its fellow-leaves one day ;
“ The sun would wither me here alone,
Long enough ere the day is gone ;
But I’ll help you, and you help me,
And then what a splendid shade there’ll be ! ”

“ Help one another,” the dew-drop cried,
Seeing another drop close to its side ;
“ This warm south breeze would dry me away,
And I should be gone by noon to-day ;
But I’ll help you, and you help me,
And we’ll make a brook, and run to the sea.”

“ Help one another,” a grain of sand
Said to another grain just at hand ;
“ The wind may carry me over the sea,
And then,—oh, what will become of me ?
But come, my brother, give me your hand,
We’ll build a mountain, and there we’ll stand.”

* * * * *

And so the snowflakes grew to drifts,
The grains of sand to mountains ;
The leaves became a pleasant shade,
And dew-drops fed the fountains.

GEORGE F. HUNTING.

December 11.

Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.—COL. iv. 5.

WE are hanging up pictures every day about the chamber-walls of our hearts that we shall have to look at when we sit in the shadows. Only Christ can make any life, young or old, truly beautiful or truly happy. . . . Would you have a beautiful and happy old age ? Would you look back with sweet satisfaction, and forward with glorious hope ? You must begin your walk with Christ in the golden days of youth.

LITTLE MOMENTS.

Little moments, how they fly,
Golden-wingèd, flitting by,
Bearing many things for me
Into vast eternity !

Never do they wait to ask
If completed is my task,
Whether gathering grain or weeds,—
Doing good or evil deeds ;
Onward haste they evermore,
Adding all unto their store !

And the little moments keep
Record, if we wake or sleep,
Of our every thought and deed,
For us all sometime to read.

Artists, are the moments too,
Ever painting something new,
On the walls, and in the air,—
Painting pictures everywhere !

If we smile, or if we frown,
Little moments put it down,
And the angel, memory,
Guards the whole eternally !

Let us, then, so careful be,
That they bear for you and me
On their little noiseless wings
Only good and pleasant things ;
And that pictures which they paint
Have no background of complaint :
So the angel, memory,
May not blush for you and me !

December 12.

Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.—PROV. xxvii. 1.

Do not put off the little kindly things you mean to do some time, perhaps very soon ; but rather make it your business to do them *now*.

WHEN I HAVE TIME.

When I have time, so many things I'll do
To make life happier and more fair
For those whose lives are crowded now with care ;
I'll help to lift them from their low despair
When I have time.

When I have time,—the friend I love so well
Shall know no more these weary toiling days ;
I'll lead her feet in sunny, pleasant ways,
And cheer her heart with words of sweetest praise
When I have time.

When you have time, the friend you hold so dear,
May be beyond the reach of all your sweet intent,
May never know that you so kindly meant
To fill her life with loving sweet content
When you had time.

Now is the time ! Ah, friend, no longer wait
To scatter loving smiles and words of cheer
To those around, whose lives are now so dear ;
They may not need you in the coming year.
Now is the time !

December 13.

*God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor
of love which ye have shewed toward His name.—
HEB. vi. 10.*

WHEN a great Grecian artist was fashioning an image for the temple, he was diligently carving the back part of the goddess, and one said to him, "You need not finish that part of the statue, because it is to be built in the wall." He replied, "The gods can see in the wall."

He had a right idea of what is due to God. That part of my religion which no man can see, should be as perfect as if it were to be observed by all.

THE BUILDERS.

All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time,
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.

Nothing useless is, or low ;
Each thing in its place is best ;
And what seems but idle show,
Strengthens and supports the rest.

For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled ;
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

Truly shape and fashion these ;
Leave no yawning gaps between ;
Think not because no man sees,
Such things will remain unseen.

In the elder days of art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part,—
“ For the gods see everywhere.”

Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen ;
Make the house where gods may dwell,
Beautiful, entire, and clean,

Else our lives are incomplete,
Standing in these walls of Time,—
Broken stairways, where the feet
Stumble as they seek to climb.

Build, to-day, then, strong and sure,
With a firm and ample base ;
And, ascending and secure
Shall to-morrow find its place.

Thus alone, can we attain
To those turrets, where the eye
Sees the world as one vast plain,
And one boundless reach of sky.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

December 14.

This God is our God forever and ever ; He will be our guide even unto death.—PSA. xlvi. 14.

THE great God who made and holds up the worlds, who numbers all the stars and calls them by their names, also made each tiny, perfect crystal of the ice, and each

pure and starry flake of snow,—formed each dainty lily-cup, fringed each petal of the gentian blue, and painted each delicate feather of the humming-bird's wing.

This same God made our wonderful bodies, and gave us souls to love Him. He promises to guide us safely to Heaven and to be our God forever and ever.

LITTLE SHIPS IN THE AIR.

“ Flakes of snow, with sails so white,
Drifting down the wintry skies,
Tell me where your route begins,
Say which way your harbor lies.”

“ In the clouds, the roomy clouds,
Arching earth, with shadowy dome,
There's the port from which we sail,—
There is tiny snowflake's home.”

“ And the cargo that you take
From those cloudy ports above,—
Is it always meant to bless,—
Sent in anger or in love?”

“ Warmth for all the tender roots,
Warmth for every living thing,
Water for the river's flow,—
This the cargo that we bring.”

“ Who's the master that you serve,
Bids you lift your tiny sails,
Brings you safely to the earth,
Guides you through the wintry gales?”

“ He who tells the birds to sing,
He who sends the April flowers,
He who ripens all the fruit,—
That great Master,—He is ours!”

EDWARD A. RAND.

December 15.

As for me, I will call upon God; and the Lord shall save me.—Psa. lv. 16.

OUR prayers are wasted up to God's throne, and come back to us laden with the love of God.

KNEEL AND PRAY.

When the bright sun, returning,
Brings back the busy day,
Before you feel temptation,
Kneel, little child, and pray.

Thank God for peaceful slumber,
For the day that He has given ;
And pray that you may use it
To make you fit for Heaven.

Think over what may happen
To lead you to do wrong ;
And pray that God will help you
In obedience to be strong.

With a loving, gentle spirit,
Kneel, little child, and pray
That God, who watched your sleeping,
Will watch you through the day.

Children's Year Book.

December 16.

The Lord is thy keeper.—Psa. cxxi. 5.

THE Lord God of Heaven and earth, the Almighty Creator of all things, He who holds the universe in His hand as if it were a very little thing,—He is your Shepherd, and has charged Himself with the care and keeping of you, as a shepherd is charged with the care and keeping of his sheep. If your hearts could really take in this thought, you would never have a fear nor a care again ; for with such a shepherd, how could it be possible for you ever to want any good thing ?

H. W. S.

DON'T BE AFRAID.

Don't be afraid of the dark,
My daughter, dear as my soul !
You see but a part of the gloomy world,
But I,—I have seen the whole,
And I know each step of the fearsome way
Till the shadows brighten to open day.

Don't be afraid of pain
My little tender child ;
When its smart is worst, there comes strength to bear
And it seems as if angels smiled,—
As I smile, dear, when I hurt you now,
In binding up that wound on your brow.

Don't be afraid of grief,—
'Twill come, as night follows day ;
But the bleakest sky has tiny rifts
When the stars shine through,—as to say
"Wait, wait a little, till night is o'er
And beautiful day comes back once more."

O, child, be afraid of sin,
But have no other fear ;
For God's in the dark as well as the light,
And, while we can feel Him near,
His hand that He gives, His love that He gave,
Lead safely, even to the dark of the grave.

DINAH M. MULOCK CRAIK.

December 17.

Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.—Psa. cxxi. 4.

"NIGHT is the time to pray,"—to ask God's forgiveness for sins committed and for duties neglected ; to ask His care and protection while I lie in my bed, sleeping through the silent darkness of the night. His eye never slumbers nor sleeps and He watches over us for good. Let me, then, never close my eyes to sleep without remembering this kind Friend.

Child's Matins and Vespers.

HYMN AT NIGHTFALL.

Jesus, Jesus,
The day is almost done,
The shadows fly across the sky,
The night is coming on ;
And thro' the fading western light,
A great red star is shining bright.

Jesus, Jesus,
The stars are very high,
And higher far than highest star
Thou reignest in the sky :
Yet here beside me, Lord, Thou art,
With waiting ear and loving heart.

Jesus, Jesus,
The wrongs that I have done,
Both great and small, Thou knowest all ;
Forgive them, every one ;
So shall my sleep be sweet and sound,
And guardian angels cluster 'round.

Jesus, Jesus,
Oh! bless not only me ;
With Thy strong arm defend from harm
All who need help from Thee ;
And since Thou knowest whom I love,
Send all a blessing from above.

Jesus, Jesus,
O King of Paradise,
When shines the light of morning bright,
Ope Thou my willing eyes ;
Or if earth's morn I never see
Take me, my Saviour, home to Thee !

CHARLES FRANCIS RICHARDSON.

December 18.

Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness, and Thy paths drop fatness.—PSA. lxv. 11.

THE coming year will show you many things, but the most beautiful of all will be the love of God.

LOBSTEIN.

NEXT YEAR.

The roses are gone, little one,
They no longer nod in the sun ;
The breeze kissed them roughly, I fear,
For the sweet leaves lie scattered and sere ;
The brook ceased its gay little song,

For "Hush!" said the ice-king so strong,—
"Rest now!" Then, all silent and slow,
There fell the white stars of the snow.
As I spread the soft coverlet warm
To shield you in cold and in storm,—
So God shields, thro' winter's chill hours,
The rootlets and buds of the flowers.
The year that is coming will bring
To my darling the blossoming spring,
When tiny young leaves will unfold,
And fragrant white lilies will hold
Their cups, to be filled with the dew;
The sunshine will waken anew
Sweet roses of summer,—and birds
Will joyously sing their love-words;
The brook will remember its song,
And merrily frolic along;
All dear things will come back to thee,—
God never forgets! thou shalt see
In bird, and flower, and sunshine clear,
His love,—thro' all the golden year.

December 19.

What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?—Psa. cxvi. 12.

ALL the year through, we have been receiving daily and hourly benefits from our Father's hand. If we are still unthankful, is it not because we have been content merely to receive, and have not given back to those about us the blessings so freely poured into our hands?

FOR THE GIVER.

"What for the Giver, giant tree?"—
 "Fair gifts of gold and red,—
These have I guarded patiently,—
 Behold my fruit outspread!
From fragile buds it slowly grew,
Fed from His hands with crystal dew;
To thank Him, at His feet I strew
 My gifts of gold and red."

“What for the Giver, happy bird ?”
“A heart’s pure, grateful song,—
I know it will not pass unheard
Amid a loftier throng.
Have I not reared my little brood ?
Who sheltered me in solitude,
Deep in the tangled, wind-swept wood ?
My gift, this grateful song.”

“What for the Giver, gentle flower ?”
“My last look His shall be ;
Has He not kept me, hour by hour,—
Watched o’er me tenderly ?
In gratitude for rain and shine,
And all the grace and beauty mine,
How could I fade, and leave no sign ?
My last look, His shall be.”

“What for the Giver, little one ?
Are there no gifts from thee ?
Behold, the year is almost done,—
Must God still waiting be ?
What deeds of kindness, flower-like, sweet ?
What words, like songs, to ears they greet ?
What heart-fruits to lay at His feet ?—
Are there no gifts from thee ?”

GEORGE COOPER.

December 20.

*Hereby perceive we the love of God because He laid down
His life for us.—I JOHN iii. 16.*

BELIEVE in God’s love, and be wise, be patient, be comforted, be cheerful and happy,—be happy in time,—be happy in eternity !

ORVILLE DEWEY.

JUST LIKE GOD.

I told a little artless child
Creation’s wondrous story ;
Of mortal man, by sin beguiled,
Of God, and all His glory ;

Of Eve's temptation, Adam's fall,
And of the flood, I told her,—
That we were God's dear children, all,
But only some were older.

To all I said, with glad surprise,
All quietly she listened ;
The while her earnest, asking eyes
With pearly tear-drops glistened.

Then, how the Magi came from far
To see the little stranger,
Led by the light of Bethlehem's star ;
Of Jesus in the manger.

I told her then of Calvary's cross ;
The grave within the garden ;
The risen Lord, whose earthly loss
Has gained for men their pardon :

“ Is it not wonderful,” said I,
“ That God, so far above us,
Should come to earth, to live and die,—
So greatly, dearly, love us ? ”

With happy glance, serene and mild,
The love-light shining through it,
“ O, no, indeed ! ” replied the child,
“ 'Twas just like God to do it ! ”

VIROE.

December 21.

Honor thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee ; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.—DEUT. v. 16.

A STURDY little figure it was, trudging bravely by, with a pail of water. “ You are a busy little girl to-day,” said I.

The round face under the broad hat was turned toward us. It was freckled, flushed, and perspiring, but

she cheerily answered, "Yes'm." "Is there no one else to carry the water?" I asked. "Nobody but mother, and she's washing." "Well, you are a good girl to help her," said I. There was a look of surprise in her gray eyes, and an almost indignant tone in her voice as she answered: "Why, *of course* I help her! I always help her, all the time; she hasn't anybody else! Mother and I are *partners*!" Little girl, little boy, are you and mother partners? Do you help her all you can?

The Working Boy.

GROWN-UP LAND.

"Merry Christmas! fair maid, with the lashes brown,
Can you tell me the way to Womanhood Town?"

"Oh, this way, that way,—never a stop;
'Tis picking up stitches that grandma will drop;
'Tis kissing the baby's troubles away;
'Tis learning that cross words never will pay;
'Tis helping mother; 'tis sewing up rents;
'Tis reading and playing; 'tis saving the cents;
'Tis loving and smiling, forgetting to frown;—
Oh, that is the way to Womanhood Town!"

"Just wait my brave lad, one moment, I pray;
Where is Manhood Town? Can you tell the way?"

"Oh, by toiling and striving to reach that land,—
A bit with the heart, a bit with the hand;
'Tis by climbing up the steep hill, Work;
'Tis by keeping out of the wide street, Shirk;
'Tis by always taking the weak one's part;
'Tis by giving mother a happy heart;
'Tis by keeping bad thoughts and actions down,
Oh, that is the way to Manhood Town!"

And the lad and the maid ran hand in hand
To their fair estates in the Grown-up Land.

December 22.

Your fathers, where are they?—ZECH. i. 5.

Our fathers trusted in Thee; they trusted and Thou didst deliver them.—PSA. xxii. 4.

BEING thus arriued in a good harbor, and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees and blessed ye God of heauen, who had brought them ouer ye vast and furious Ocean, and delivered them from all ye periles, and miseries therof, againe to set their feete on ye firm and stable earth, their proper elemente.

WILLIAM BRADFORD.

THE PILGRIM FATHERS.

The Pilgrim Fathers, where are they ?
The waves that brought them o'er
Still roll in the bay, and throw their spray
As they break along the shore;
Still roll in the bay as they rolled that day
When the Mayflower moored below,
When the sea around was black with storms
And white the shore with snow.

The mists, that wrapped the Pilgrim's sleep
Still brood upon the tide ;
And the rocks yet keep their watch by the deep
To stay its waves of pride.
But the snow-white sail that he gave to the gale,
When the heavens looked dark, is gone ;
As an angel's wing, through an opening cloud,
Is seen, and then withdrawn.

* * * * *

The Pilgrim Fathers are at rest.
When summer's throned on high,
And the world's warm breast is in verdure dressed,
Go, stand on the hill where they lie.
The earliest ray of the golden day
On that hallowed spot is cast,
And the evening sun, as he leaves the world,
Looks kindly on that spot, last.

The Pilgrim *spirit* has not fled;
It walks in noon's broad light;
And it watches the bed of the glorious dead,
With the holy stars, by night.
It watches the bed of the brave who have bled,
And shall guard this ice-bound shore,
Till the waves of the bay, where the Mayflower lay,
Shall foam and freeze no more.

JOHN PIERPONT.

December 23.

Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.—PSA. cxlv. 16.

ONE wintry afternoon, at yule-tide, I had been skating on a pretty lake, Dalsjon, three miles from Gottenburg. On my way home I noticed, at every farmer's house we passed, there was erected, in the middle of the door-yard, a pole, to the top of which was bound a large, full sheaf of grain. "Why is this?" I asked of my companion. "Oh, that's for the birds, the little wild birds! They must have a Christmas too, you know." There is not a peasant in all Sweden who will sit down with his children to a Christmas dinner within doors, till he has first raised aloft a Christmas dinner for the little birds that live in the cold and snow without.

W. W. THOMAS, JR.
(Former Minister to Sweden.)

CHRISTMAS IN SWEDEN.

They tell a lovely story, in lands beyond the sea,
How, when the King of Glory lay on His mother's knee,
Before the prophet-princes came, bringing gifts in hand,
The dumb beasts felt the miracle, men could not understand.

The gentle, patient donkey and the ox that trod the corn,
Knelt down beside the manger, and knew that Christ was born;
And so they say in Sweden, at twelve, each Christmas night,
The dumb beasts kneel to worship, and see the Christmas light!

This fancy makes men kinder to creatures needing care,
They give them Christmas greeting, and dainty Christmas fare.

The cat and dog sup gaily, and a sheaf of golden corn
Is raised above the roof-tree for the birds on Christmas morn!

We do not live in Sweden, but we can feed the birds,
And make dumb creatures happy by kindly deeds and words.
No animal so humble, no creeping worm so small,
But that the God who made us, has made and loves them all!
If we to them are cruel,—like Christ we cannot be,
And this shall be our lesson from our dear Christmas tree!

Our Dumb Animals.

December 24.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him.—MATT. ii. 1, 2.

REMEMBER that Christmas is kept as the birthday of our dear Lord. Get so close to His heart that you may catch His spirit, and so may give as He did,—freely, gladly, and most abundantly, to those who most need.

CHRIST'S BIRTHDAY.

“Mamma, what is Christmas?” “How can I say?
I will try to answer you, ‘true as true’!
It is just the loveliest, lovely day,
That is steeped in rose-color all the way through!”

And still, “what is Christmas?” “Darling, come here;
It is meant for the birthday,—‘true as true,’ —
Of a beautiful child that was born in Judea,
Whom His mother loved, as I love you;
That grew up to teach you how you should seek
To be in your spirit ‘lowly and meek,’
And onward higher and higher go,
Till you’re changed to an angel whiter than snow;
And offered freely (that all might take),
The gift of Himself for the whole world’s sake.
And Christmas means this:—
A little child’s bliss,
And the love of the dear Christ, felt like a kiss.”

December 25.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.—LUKE ii. 8-11.

VERY beautiful must have been the angel's song that Christmas night and very comforting to the shepherds the words, "Fear not!" but the "good tidings of great joy," that the long-expected Jesus had come to bless the world, must have filled their hearts with thankful gladness.

**"WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED THEIR FLOCKS
BY NIGHT."**

Like small curled feathers, white and soft,
The little clouds went by,
Across the moon, and past the stars,
And down the western sky;
In upland pastures, where the grass
With frosted dew was white,
Like snowy clouds the young sheep lay,
That first, best, Christmas night.

The shepherds slept, and, glimmering faint,
With twist of thin, blue smoke,
Only their fire's crackling flames
The tender silence broke,—
Save when a young lamb raised his head,
Or, when the night-wind blew,
A nestling bird would softly stir
Where dusky olives grew!

With finger on her solemn lip,
Night hushed the shadowy earth,
And only stars, and angels saw
The little Saviour's birth ;
Then came such flash of silver light
Across the bending skies,
The wondering shepherds woke, and hid
Their frightened, dazzled eyes ;

But all their gentle, sleepy flock
Looked up, then slept again,
Nor knew the light that dimmed the stars
Brought endless peace to men ;
Nor even heard the gracious words
That down the ages ring :—
“ The Christ is born, the Lord has come,
Good will on earth to bring ! ”

Then o'er the moonlit, misty fields,
Dumb with the world's great joy,
The shepherds sought the white-walled town,
Where lay the baby-boy ;
And, oh, the gladness of the world,
The glory of the skies,
Because the longed-for Christ had smiled
In Mary's happy eyes !

MARGARET DELAND.

December 26.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.—LUKE ii. 15, 16.

THERE was no soft cradle for this child, but only a bed of hay. The little inn, or hotel, was full, and there was no room there for the mother Mary and the child, but out among the cattle a place was found. Nobody in the little town knew that the Christ-child had come there

that night ; but the angels knew, and sang for joy, and the shepherds rejoiced when they had found the baby, and Mary was glad that such glory had come to her.

LUCY WHEELOCK.

MARY'S CRADLE SONG.

Sleep, my little Jesus,
On Thy bed of hay,
While the shepherds homeward
Journey on their way.

Mother is Thy shepherd
And will vigil keep :
O, did the voices wake Thee ?
Sleep, my Jesus, sleep !

Sleep, my little Jesus,
While Thou art my own !
Ox and ass Thy neighbors,—
Shalt Thou have a throne ?

Will they call me blessed ?
Shall I stand and weep ?
O, be it far, Jehovah !
Sleep, my Jesus, sleep !

Sleep, my little Jesus,
Wonder-baby mine !
Well the singing angels
Greet Thee as divine.

Through my heart, as Heaven,
Low the echoes sweep
Of glory to Jehovah !
Sleep, my Jesus, sleep !

WILLIAM C. GANNETT.

December 27.

And when they (the wise men) were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him ; and when they had opened their treasures they presented unto Him gifts ; gold and frankincense and myrrh.—MATT. ii. 11.

THE wise men, in their Eastern home saw a bright star in the sky which guided them to the child. It was a long journey for these men, and I am sure every night they must have looked carefully for the star to be certain they were going right. At last, they came to Bethlehem, and, lo, the star stood over where the young child was. Can you think how glad they were to find the Christ? And they poured out the gifts which they had brought,—treasures of gold, and sweet spices, and fragrant gums from lands far away. . . . Can you bring any gifts to Him, like the wise men? The treasures you can bring are prayer and praise, and the loving service of a willing heart.

LUCY WHEELOCK.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

In the bleak midwinter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone ;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter
Long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him,
Nor earth sustain,
Heaven and earth shall flee away,
When He comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter
A stable-place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty,—
Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels
May have gathered there ;
Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air ;
But only His mother
In her maiden bliss
Worshiped her Beloved
With a kiss.

What can I give Him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd,
I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man,
I would do my part,—
Yet what I can I give Him,
Give my heart.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

December 28.

And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head.—MATT. viii. 20.

Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour.—ACTS v. 31.

And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us.
—I JOHN v. 14.

CHRIST loves us so much that He died to save us, and having loved His own, He loves them unto the end. If He so loves us, can He ever forget us? No: He watches over us and listens to our prayers, ready to help us in every time of need.

CHRISTMAS.

Do you think, dear little children
That the day of the Saviour's birth,—
The happy Christmas-day, is kept
In Heaven, as well as on earth?
Do you think that while the echoes
From the harps of glory ring,
He bends His ear to listen
To the song which the children sing?

Does He think of His life in the earth-land,—
 Of His lowly manger-bed,
How He wandered lone and weary
 With no place to lay His head?
In all the fair homes of Judea,
 He could claim no little spot;
And, saddest of all, He came to His own,
 And His own received Him not.

To-night, He is King of glory,
 And over all the earth,
The nations hail with rejoicing
 The day of the Saviour's birth;—
In lofty and grand cathedrals,
 In chapels by the way,
Thousands of happy voices sing
 The angels' song to-day.

And He always listens kindly
 Wherever His children be;
He bends His ear to earnest words
 Of prayer from you or me.
To the words of Holy Scripture
 From the lips of a little child,
He lovingly answers,—“Blessed
 Are the pure and undefiled.”

December 29.

Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbor's good.
—*1 COR. X. 24.*

A LITTLE girl and her brother went on an errand one cold frosty morning. They were dressed very thinly, and the little girl's coat was too short and too small; but, as they walked briskly along, she drew the curly-haired brother close, and said merrily: “Johnnie, come under my coat; you look shivery.”

“It isn't half big enough for me too,” said Johnnie.

“Oh, I guess I can stretch it a little.” And, with a tremendous jump and pull, she tucked the little head inside the scanty coat, and they put their arms around

one another, and grew warm and cozy as two birds in one nest. How many coats have we to "stretch a little," at the beginning of the new year, I wonder !

MARGARET SPENCER.

A SUGGESTION FOR A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Suppose we think little about "Number One;"
Suppose we all help some one else to have fun;
Suppose we ne'er speak of the faults of a friend,
Suppose we are ready our own to amend;
Suppose we laugh *with* and not *at* other folk,
And never hurt any one, "just for the joke;"—
Suppose we hide trouble, and show only cheer,—
'Tis likely we'll have quite a "happy new year!"

MARY MAPES DODGE.

December 30.

If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him.—MATT. vii. 11.

As the old year goes and the new year comes, what "good things" shall we ask of God for our loved ones?

LITTLE SERVANTS.

Two little eyes,
Blue,—blue,—
Blue as the azure deep of the skies,—
Now so roguish, now wondrous wise,
Solemn and funny, all in a twink,
Changing and changing with every wink,
What shall we ask for these little eyes?

Open them, Lord,
To see, in Thy word
Wondrous things;
Light them with love,
And shade them above
With angels' wings.

Two little lips,
Red,—red,—
Red as the flamy coral tips,
Sweet as the rose the wild bee sips,
Singing and prattling all day long,
And kissing and coaxing with witchery strong,
What shall we ask for these little lips ?

From thine altar, Lord, above,
Touch those lips with fire of love ;
Pure, pure, let them be,
Speaking holy melodies
Out of a holy heart, that rise,
Warm, bright, up to Thee !

Two little hands,
Busy,—busy,—
Busy as bird and busy as bee,
Gathering " funny things " for me ;
Weaving webs, and building a house
Just the size for a wee, wee mouse ;"
What shall we ask for these little hands ?

Lord, with wisdom filled,
Teach these hands to build
Thine own temple ;
Let them skilful be,—
Cunning to work for Thee,
By Thine example.

Two little feet,
Nimble,—nimble,—
Trot-foot and light-foot,—oh, what a pair !
Now here, now there, now everywhere ;
Running of errands, dancing in glee,
Skipping and jumping merrily,—
What shall we ask for these little feet ?

Lead them a blessed pilgrimage
From childhood through to saintly age,
Dear Lord, we pray ;
Hold them a light, in the dim, dark night,
And, out of the narrow path of the right,
Ne'er let them stray !

December 31.

And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit filled with wisdom ; and the grace of God was on Him.
—LUKE ii. 40.

HE waxed strong in spirit. Strong ! What a word is that for all of you, my dear children ! You know,—little boys especially know,—how you value and honor those who are strong in body. The strong limb, the fleet foot, the sturdy arm, the active frame,—you do well to value these things ; they are God's gifts. . . . What natural vigor is to the body, strength of character is to the mind. A stout heart, that is what you want,—a stout heart which will be able to resist all the temptations to do evil, which scorns to tell a lie, which will never consent to be betrayed into doing what is wrong ; a strong, hardy conscience, which fixes itself on matters of real importance, and will not trifle, will not waste its powers on things of no concern. Therefore, I say, be stronger and stronger every year.

DEAN STANLEY.

TO THE OLD AND THE NEW YEAR.

O year that is going, take with you
Some evil that dwells in my heart ;
Let selfishness, doubt,
With the old year go out,—
With joy I would see them depart.

O year that is coming, bring with you
Some virtue of which I have need ;
More patience to bear,
And more kindness to share,
And more love that is true love indeed.

O year that is going, take with you
Impatience and wilfulness,—pride ;
The sharp word that slips
From these too hasty lips,
I would cast, with the old year, aside.

O year that is coming, bring with you
More charity unto the weak,—
A deep, growing peace,
That never shall cease,—
Of these things, I surely have need.

LAURA F. ARMITAGE.

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